

Curtin Graduate School of Business

**A Stability Contingent Model of Interpersonal Trust
in a Local Government Context**

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**This thesis is presented for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
of
Curtin University**

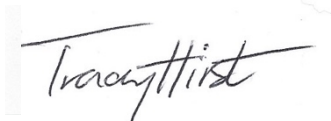
July 2018

Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

The research presented and reported in this thesis was conducted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), updated in March 2014. The proposed research study received human research ethics approval from the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00262), Approval Number #GSB05-14.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Tracey Hirst', with a horizontal line above the first name.

Tracey Hirst
4 July 2018

Abstract

This exploratory qualitative research was undertaken within a Western Australian local government using grounded research – an adaptation of grounded theory method particularised to research in an organisational setting (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Whiteley, 2004). A tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust was developed. The model represents this study's findings that 'stable lack of trust', 'satisfied trust' or 'alert trust' results from a trustor's assessment of the *trustee characteristics* of benevolence, competence and *attributions for the trustee's success or failure*, being stability and locus of causality.

This study explored trust between staff in an organisation, employing a multi-dimensional approach. In the first research focus, the study explored and contrasted the perceived and actual factors impacting on trust between supervisors and subordinates. The second research focus contrasted the antecedents for blue- and white-collar worker trust in a supervisor. The third focus entailed examination of the meso level in which the trust relationships were embedded, pertaining to the organisational structures that impacted on interpersonal trust between staff.

The data supported the extant trust literature in its view that a trustor's favourable assessment of the other party's benevolence and competence is central to trust. However, the notions of 'stability' and 'locus of causality' emerged from the findings as salient to trust assessments.

Counter-intuitively, the data indicated that a lack of competence did not negatively impact on trust if the trustor perceived that the level of competence was improving (unstable) and attributed the lack of competence to factors external to the trustee, rather than to lack of effort (an internal attribution). Thus, this study draws upon attribution theory's notions of 'stability' and 'locus of causality' (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1986) to explain how individuals develop, retain or lose trust in an organisational colleague.

* For ease of reading, this thesis has used the feminine pronoun as a gender-neutral expression, which is intended to inclusively refer to all genders.

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Abbreviations

ABI	Ability, Benevolence, Integrity (Model of Trust)
EBA	Enterprise Bargaining Agreement
HR	human resources
PD	position description
RO	research objective

Acknowledgements

This doctoral journey has been the most consuming, at times difficult, but incredibly rewarding challenge. I am so fortunate that all my academic and local government colleagues, family and friends have been unwaveringly supportive of me in this endeavour. I give my heartfelt thanks to all of you. However, there are a few people who I particularly wish to mention.

I would like to thank my wonderful family: my husband Chris and our children Katie, Sarah, Tom and Amy. My mother, Dawn Rogers, deserves a medal, as she diligently undertook grammar editing on multiple versions of this thesis.

Thank you to my marvellous supervisor, Emeritus Professor Alma Whiteley, who was generous with her time and wisdom. I am grateful too, for the pragmatic guidance of Associate Professor Niki Hynes and Dr Scott Fitzgerald.

I am pleased to thank my friend and co-doctoral student, Helen Todd, who both supported and challenged me as we journeyed along parallel paths.

Finally, it is a pleasure to thank those who made this research possible – the organisation in which I conducted this research and to all the anonymous participants in this study. I am forever indebted to you for the openness with which you shared your thoughts and experiences.

You are all amazing and continue to inspire me.

I also gratefully acknowledge the support of the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Professional copyediting and proofreading services were provided by Matthew Sidebotham in accordance with the university-endorsed *Australian Guidelines for Editing Research Theses* and the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice* Parts D ('Language and illustrations') and E ('Completeness and consistency').

Chapter 1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to advance the understanding of interpersonal trust through research conducted within an Australian local government organisation. This was achieved by exploring supervisor–subordinate trust relationships with reference to the congruence of perceived and reported trust-promoting or trust-inhibiting behaviours. As context and signalling trust beliefs are highly relevant to trust, this study was also interested in how organisational structure (i.e. the context internal to the organisation) supported or undermined supervisor and subordinate trust. This introductory chapter presages these points and the literature review in Chapter 2.

Numerous tangible and intangible benefits flow from the activation of trust in organisations: increased cooperation, innovation, organisational agility, resource sharing and communication, performance, employee satisfaction and lower employee turnover (e.g. Dirks, 2000; Juvina et al., 2013; Matzler & Renzl, 2006; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Vaughan-Smith, 2013).

The context for this study was Australian local government, which is a large industry employing 189,500 people as at June 2017; this is approximately 10 per cent of government employees over the three levels of government (Federal, State and Local) (ABS, 2017). Despite the technical attributes of its responsibilities, contemporary local government is regarded as a very relational business (Lawrence-Pietroni, 2013) owing to its localised (‘grass roots’) contact with the community (ALGA, 2012; Dollery & Crase, 2004; Walker & Andrews, 2014).

The nature of the study was interpretive as perceptions and insights were sought. Accordingly, this study was a ‘becoming’ study, having adopted a constructivist and social constructionist ontology, an interpretive epistemology and a qualitative methodology. The theoretical perspectives that supported this study were twofold. The first was symbolic interactionism, which addresses meaning as a product of social interaction ‘through the dual process of definition and interpretation [that] operates

both to sustain established patterns of joint conduct and to open them up to transformation' (Blumer, 1966, p. 538).

The second theoretical perspective was phenomenology, which 'acknowledge[s] that there is a phenomenon to be described, but that our only access to it is through [the participant's] lived, embodied experience' (Guptill, 2011, p. 270). Phenomenological questions examined supervisor-subordinate experiences, eliciting the individual perceptions of those in the dyadic relationship. The research procedure included an initial literature review in accordance with grounded theory principles and a familiarisation study to gather insights into the presentation of the researcher's self, relevance and acceptability of the proposed interview questions and length of the interviews.

Using theoretical sampling, and in alignment with grounded theory, the data collection plan was modified according to the 'theories' of respondents (Charmaz, 2011). Content analysis included utterances as units of analysis, coding, categorisation and the constant comparison of the categories of meaning. Data were also subjected to thematic analysis.

In terms of theory, limited studies have holistically examined trust antecedents for dyadic relationships in concert with the organisational structure's impacts upon trust, with no such studies having been conducted in relation to Australian local government. In practical terms, the study will inform management and organisation designers of the trust needs of both supervisors and subordinates.

1.1 Operational Definitions

Constructs such as trust and structure are well used across a range of disciplines and in the literature. These constructs are defined variously according to the disciplinary focus. However, for the operational purposes of this study, the following definitions are adopted.

1.1.1 Trust

This study uses the definition articulated by Six (2007), which combines the most cited definitions by Rousseau et al. (1998) and Mayer et al. (1995) (Siebert et. al, 2015).

[T]rust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another party, based upon the expectation that the other will perform a particular action that is important [to the trustor]. (Six, 2007, p. 290)

1.1.2 Organisational structure

Structures relates to the explicit and implicit ‘rules’ of the organisation, such as (Roy, 2008):

- the functional hierarchy, span of control, position limits and basis of the division structure (product, geography or customer);
- the reward system;
- status structure (titles, allocation of corporate vehicles);
- problem-solving structure and level of decision-making;
- information channels and internal governance;
- how tasks and responsibilities are allocated;
- how tasks and employees are monitored and coordinated; and
- how decisions are made within the organisation (e.g. centralised or decentralised).

1.1.3 Relative organisational roles

The purpose of this study was to investigate the trust of organisational actors in a dyadic relationship in relation to the relative hierarchical roles. Thus, participants were described as working in one of three roles relative to the other party in the dyadic relationship. These roles are: subordinate, supervisor, and individuals in a management role. As the descriptor pertained to the dyadic relationship, a participant could be described as a subordinate when referring to one relationship but a supervisor when referring to a different relationship.

1.1.3.1 Supervisor and subordinate

In alignment with common usage, a supervisor was defined as a person in the organisation whose formal role description included direct supervision of staff. However, as this study was focused upon dyadic relationships with reference to the relative formal power of the individuals within the relationship, within this study, the ‘supervisor’ descriptor referred to an individual who, in the organisational chart, was one hierarchical level in the organisational chart above another research participant. The role of the individual with less formal power was termed as the ‘subordinate’.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the roles according to the organisational hierarchy within the local government authority where this research was conducted compared to the role descriptor of ‘supervisor’ and ‘subordinate’ employed in this study.

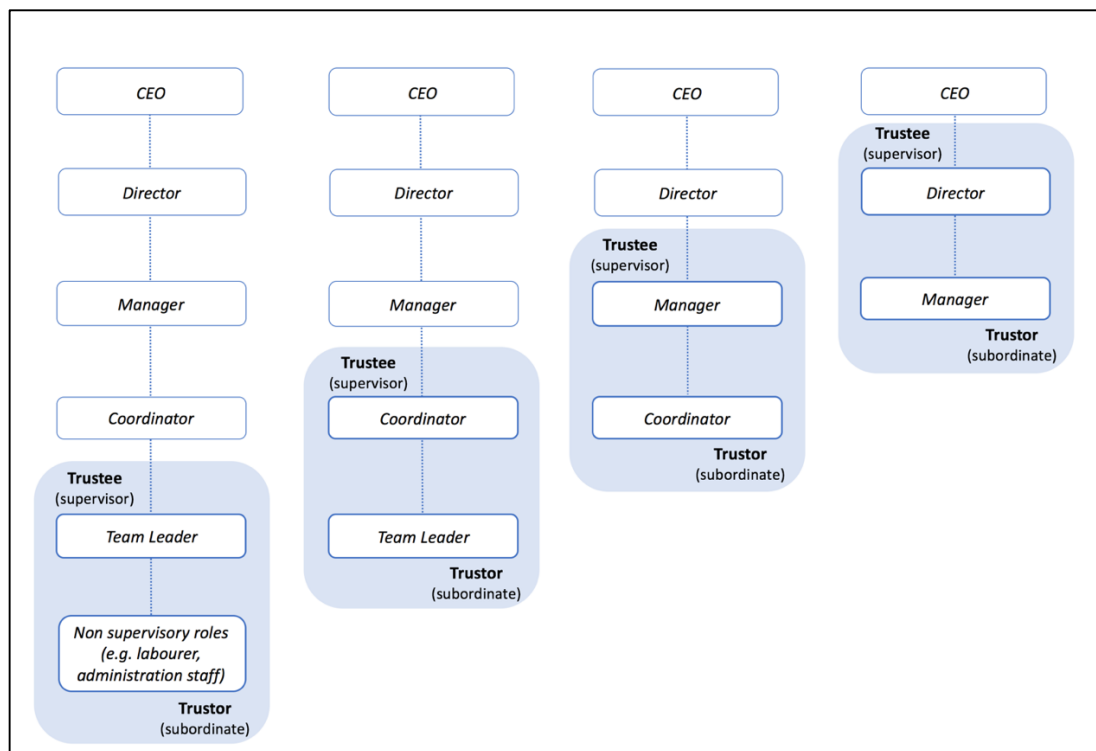


Figure 1.1 Illustration of ‘supervisor’ and ‘subordinate’ roles used relative to the other party in the dyad. Pertains to RO1 and RO2.

1.1.3.2 Individual in a management role

To avoid confusion as to whether the trust referent was the entire management team, as is used in some trust research, the term ‘individual in a management role’ has been used. As illustrated in Figure 1.2, an ‘individual in management’ was a minimum of two hierarchical levels above the other party in the trust dyad (the ‘subordinate’).

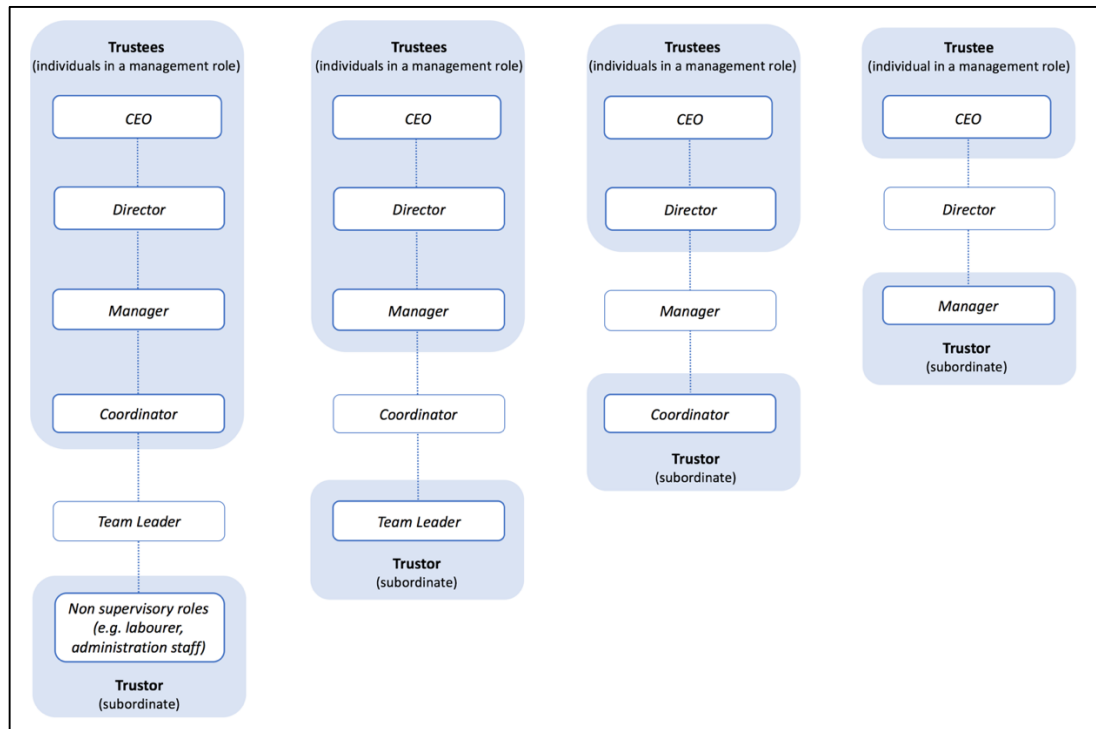


Figure 1.2 Illustration of ‘individuals in a management role’ and ‘subordinate’ roles used relative to the other party in the dyad. Pertains to RO3.

1.1.4 White-collar employees

This term refers to those employees not engaged in physical labour and who primarily conduct their work within an office environment. White-collar employment is typified as cognitive and information work (Drucker, 2011; Hopp et al., 2009; Huang, 2011; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004). Examples in local government are: mid- and upper-management, engineering design, administration and finance employees.

1.1.5 Blue-collar employees

The term ‘blue-collar employees/workers’ denotes those employees who are primarily engaged in physical work and are seldom required to work in an office environment

(Bagwell & Bush, 2000; Billett, 2006; Solnick, 1985). Required skills, certifications and licences tend to be pragmatic in nature. Examples of blue-collar employees in local government are those who maintain local government infrastructure such as parks, streetscapes and roads, as well as waste-truck operators.

1.2 Research question and research objectives

1.2.1 Research questions

1. What are the *perceived* factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?
2. What are the *received* factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?
3. What aspects of organisational structure are perceived to affect trust between a subordinate and a supervisor?

1.2.2 Research objectives (ROs)

Research objective #1

RO1a: Elicit the supervisor behaviours that a subordinate identifies as affecting trust in her supervisor

RO1b: Elicit the behaviours that a supervisor perceives to affect a subordinate's trust in herself

RO1c: Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO1a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO1b)

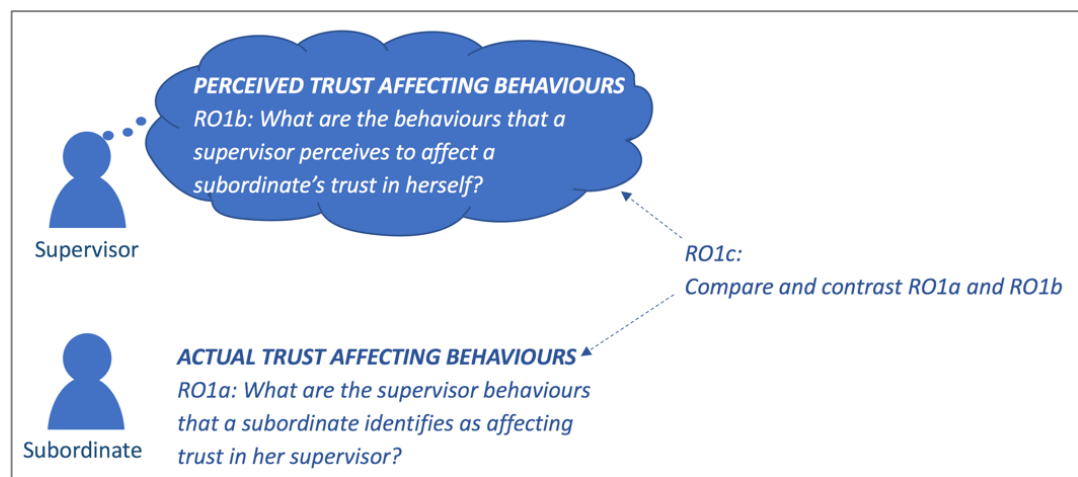


Figure 1.3 Research objectives (ROs) 1a, 1b and 1c (Upwards trust)

Research objective #2

- RO2a: *Elicit the subordinate behaviours that a supervisor identifies as affecting trust in her subordinate*
- RO2b: *Elicit the behaviours that a subordinate perceives to affect a supervisor's trust in herself*
- RO2c: *Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO2a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO2b)*

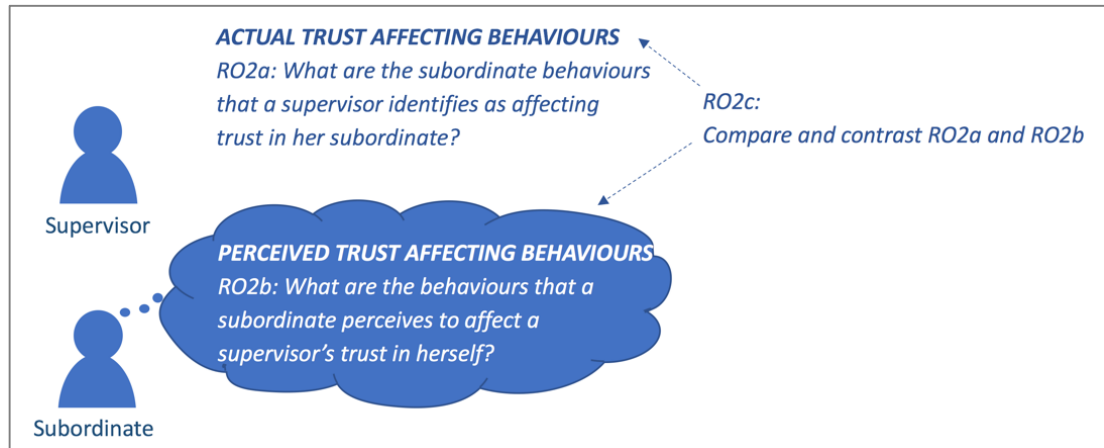


Figure 1.4 Research objectives (ROs) 2a, 2b and 2c (Downwards trust)

Research Objective #3

- RO3: Identify how trust between a subordinate and supervisor is perceived to be affected by elements of organisational structure. The roles indicated in Figure 1.2 emerged from data pertaining to structure.

1.3 Background and selective literature review

1.3.1 Research context

The research context of this study was local government, commonly referred to as the third tier of Australian government. Although local government is 'big business' (DLG, 1981; Miles, 2017), with a 2015–2016 expenditure of around \$3.6 billion (AUD) in Western Australian local government (Miles, 2017), there has been scant academic research on this sphere of government (ACELG, 2011). In contrast, in the decade to 2011 there were at least nine major federal and state enquiries into the current state and future prospects of local government (ACELG, 2011).

A consistent finding from these enquiries was the financial challenges under which many local governments operate. Around 50 per cent of local governments in Western Australia are reliant on State and Federal grants to remain financially sustainable (Access Economics, 2006; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006). This gave political impetus for local government reform in WA via mergers and boundary changes to build larger, but fewer, local governments (DLG, 2012; Dollery, 2009). The Western Australian State Government publicly deliberated for over nine years on local government reform, which was described as ‘an unnecessarily long process that has created unrest and concern ... particularly for employees of local government’ (Silcox, 2013).

The data for this study were collected in the wake of the aborted 2014-2015 local government reform (DLGC, 2015), in which the local government organisation from which participants were drawn was to be merged with a neighbouring local government.

In this study, there were two definable sub-contexts of local government employee; white-collar and blue-collar. White-collar roles are bureaucratic in nature and mainly office-based. Blue-collar roles are usually operations, out in the field and pragmatic in nature. The stereotype of blue-collar roles is that they lack autonomy and consist of routine tasks which are bereft of higher purpose; however, in actuality the tasks are diverse and blue-collar workers often find fulfilment in their craft (Hennequin, 2007; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Although blue- and white-collar roles are more appropriately located on a continuum rather than neatly stratified (Bottero, 2005), the motivation for the consideration in this research of two sub-contexts is that they may lend depth to the study and offer lessons that can be applied from one context to the other.

1.3.2 Nature of the trust construct

Trust has attracted attention from many disciplines, including economics, sociology, psychology, marketing, human-computer interaction, leadership and management. Economists have researched trust from the frame of being rational, calculative and institutional, and the role of risk in trust (Lindenberg, 2000; Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998; Zanini, 2007). The major theory to emerge from the economic

discipline was the concept of rational trust – the cognitive weighing up of costs, benefits and risk. However, there are two limitations to rational trust. Firstly, the ability to apply rationality and logic is constrained by a limited cognitive capacity and by the inadequacy of available information. Secondly, rational trust excludes concepts of individuals considering or acting upon beliefs regarding fairness of outcomes, such as having the other-regarding preferences and being inequality-averse or altruistic (Cox, 2004).

In contrast, psychologists have primarily studied how trust is affected by the personal attributes and internal cognitions of individuals within the trusting dyad (Rousseau et al., 1998). This field of research has offered the concept of affect-based trust, wherein the level of benevolence or care is an antecedent to trust, and the trust decision is made at an instinctive level: ‘we trust routinely, reflexively, and somewhat mindlessly across a broad range of social situations’ (Kramer, 2009, p. 71).

Sociologists have researched trust from the frame of socially constructed relationships between people or institutions (Rousseau et al., 1998) and examined generalised, or pre-disposition to, trust which occurs as a ‘result of cultural heritage or institutional quality’ (Dinesen, 2013, p. 114).

Leadership and management scholars have researched the effects of trust on organisations (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001; Kaasa & Parts, 2013; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011; Ng, 2013; Schöbel, 2009) and incorporated trust into leadership theories such as transformational leadership, charismatic leadership and Leader Member Exchange (LMX), which emphasise relationships and affect between leaders and followers (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Kimura & Yoshimori, 1989). However, management scholars have generally assumed trust to be a universal construct (Muethel & Hoegl, 2012).

As suggested by its multidisciplinary nature, trust exhibits many nuances. Trust can be an outcome, a cause or a moderator (Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust is dynamic and complex; levels of trust may vary depending upon the subject matter and the maturity of a relationship (Ali Babar et al., 2007; Choi & Han, 2011; Schoorman et al., 2007). Although there is scholarly agreement on and confidence in what trust does, there is a lack of firm consensus regarding how trust is formed or even how it is to be defined (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999; De Jong et al., 2017; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011).

1.3.2.1 Conditions and preconditions for trust

Inherent in any definition of trust is that ‘vulnerability’ is a precondition for trust to exist. The trustor (the individual doing the trusting) is vulnerable to the other party ‘betraying’ the trustor by failing to act (passive betrayal) or acting against the trustor’s best interest (active betrayal), which may also include the trusted party (the trustee) distancing herself from the issue or their relationship with the trustor (Gambetta, 2000). The risk results from information gaps (in the trustee’s intent and/or ability over various contexts) and uncertainty in predicting the trustee’s future behaviour (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999). The act of trust has therefore been described as acting with absolute confidence in situations that are uncertain. The main research avenues that trust scholars have pursued are:

1. the outcomes of trust (Abrams et al., 2003; Chughtai & Buckley, 2008; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Mooradian et al., 2006);
2. the environment and context (Hardin, 2002; Kramer & Cook, 2007; Lount & Pettit, 2012; Mooradian et al., 2006), including the relationship between the trustee and the trustor (Sarker et al., 2003);
3. trust relating to traits of the trustor, such as propensity to trust (Mooradian et al., 2006) and correlation with the ‘Big Five’ personality traits of extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness to experience (FormyDuval et al., 1995; Kammrath & Scholer, 2011); and
4. trustworthiness as assessed by evaluating the trusting behaviours/traits of the trustee (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Doney et al., 1998; Mayer et al., 1995; Rempel et al., 1985).

Multi-dimensional studies into trust are scarce, as the field is relatively nascent and as research has tended to focus upon either relationship trust theories or cognition-based trust theories (Li et al., 2012; Ng, 2013). However, taking a holistic view, trust has been summarised to be founded on a belief that the other party has both the *intention* and *ability* to fulfil a goal (Deutsch, 1960; Mayer et al., 1995).

Lorini et al. (2009) claim to have developed an integrated trust theory: that the foundation of trust is the trustor’s belief that the trustee has the ‘right properties’ to ensure the trustor’s goal can be achieved. However, these theories neglect a vital aspect, which is that the *context must also enable the trustee* to fulfil the trustor’s

expectations (Nooteboom, 2011). Contextual factors can be broadly categorised (Kelley, 2003; Simpson, 2007b) as:

- the relevant ‘rules’ and norms;
- the degree of corresponding interests between the dyad;
- previous interactions (not restricted to the current actors in the trusting relationship) that the parties believe are relevant; and
- the interplay of the dyad’s interdependence (such as level of power asymmetry between the parties) with its preferences for conflict avoidance.

1.3.2.2 Trust antecedents

The trust literature has varied in the terminology and the levels of analysis used for trust antecedents, which creates a challenge when discussing trust antecedents (De Jong, 2017; Shapiro, 1987). However, the trust model of Mayer et al. (1995) takes a broad and high-level perspective of trust antecedents and is commonly cited and used as a basis for contemporary trust studies (Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009; Reiche et al., 2014).

In developing their ‘Ability, Benevolence, Integrity’ (ABI) trust model, Mayer et al. (1995) undertook a meta-analysis of the literature with the aim of integrating trust research from multiple disciplines. The resultant model encompasses characteristics of the trustor (propensity to trust), and trustee (perceived trustworthiness traits) and the trustor’s risk beliefs, while a feedback loop from outcomes informs subsequent trust assessments.

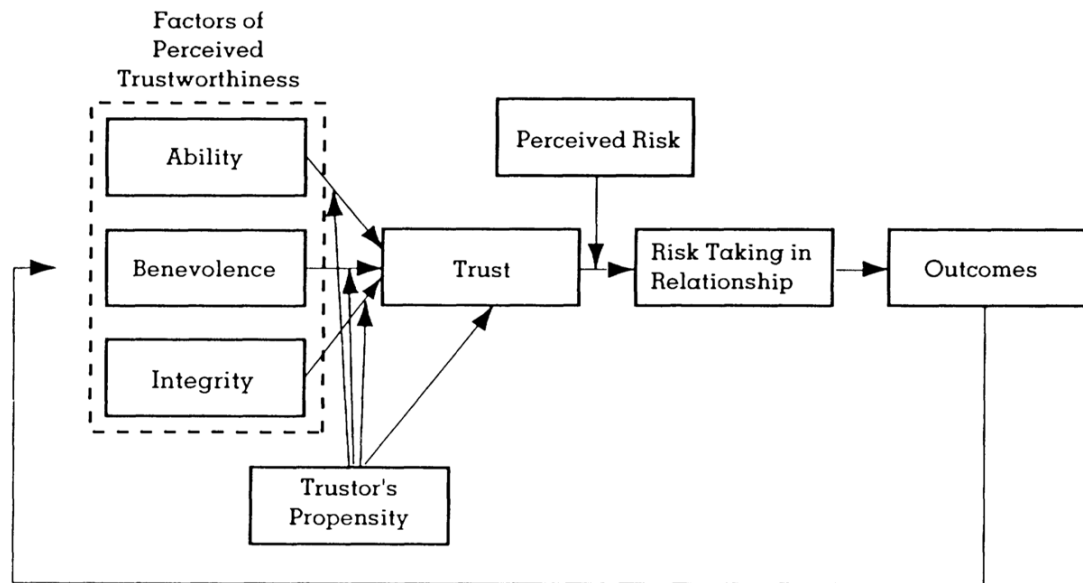


Figure 1.5 Mayer, Davis and Schoorman's 'ABI' Model of Trust (Mayer et al., 1995, p 715. Reprinted with permission from the Academy of Management)

1.3.2.3 Salience of trust for organisations

Trust can be considered a social capital resource for an organisation in the same way that assets and finances are resources that facilitate an organisation's achievement of its goals (Dovey, 2009). Trust facilitates higher outcome performance (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008; Crossley et al., 2013), promotes relationships, resource sharing and other cooperative behaviours, and increases the depth, breadth and efficiency of knowledge transfer (Juvina et al., 2013; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Raab et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2007) thereby improving knowledge creation (Mooradian et al., 2006). Trust lowers unwanted employee turnover (Davis et al., 2000; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Vaughan-Smith, 2013), facilitates an innovative culture (Dovey, 2009; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Ng, 2013) and increases organisational agility (Molina-Morales et al., 2011).

Conversely, in an organisational environment of distrust, time (resources) is spent on 'decoding' messages and double-checking to confirm truthfulness of statements (Abrams et al., 2003). Innovative ideas are often left unspoken in a distrustful environment, as employees are unsure of the consequences of voicing unusual solutions (Abrams et al., 2003). However, research indicates that there is an optimal level of trust within organisations, beyond which trust offers a diminishing value of returns to an enterprise; too much trust can depress critical thinking, leading to group-

think and insufficient monitoring. This increases the organisation's vulnerability to opportunistic actions by others (Erdem, 2003; Molina-Morales et al., 2011). Industry acknowledges this view, with leading organisations actively and strategically looking for the 'sweet spot' in their trust endeavours (Lacy et al., 2011).

The formation of trust in organisations, therefore, faces challenges in the key areas highlighted in the definition of trust; namely, that trust can only exist where there is willing vulnerability, and a confident expectation that the trustee will, *without controls or monitoring in place*, act in the trustor's best interest. As levels of risk and vulnerability vary between situations, trust is not relevant in all circumstances (Searle et al., 2011). However, risk and vulnerability are inherent to organisations, arising from differences in power and status and interdependence between organisational actors.

Highly salient to trust within organisations is the 'problematic relationship between trust and power' (Tomlinson, 2005, p. 1170), as embodied in any trust relationship is the trustor's willing vulnerability to the good intentions of the trustee. Organisational structures typically display asymmetrical power, which has possible consequences for the power of agency and agentic power. Both relate to an ability to achieve a desired outcome; however, the subtle but important difference is that the power of agency is a power in the face of potential resistance of other people, while agentic power is power in the face of potential resistance of a social structure (Campbell, 2009). Formal leadership is characterised by the power of agency, whereas employees are more strongly characterised by agentic power. Campbell (2009) argues that these forms of power are unrelated and not necessarily in balance. The agentic power may be exercised when employees display organisational citizenship behaviours (e.g. loyalty), engage in behaviours that affect their work output (e.g. working slowly, conducting private business at work or modifying their level of discretionary labour), constructively or destructively voice concerns, or leave the organisation (Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

1.3.3 Organisational structure

All organisations coordinate activities to achieve the organisation's objectives. Over time, patterns of functioning emerge; these are termed the 'organisational structure'

(Chia, 1997). Structure relates to repeated observances and practices, such as the organisational hierarchy and status structure, span of control, position limits, decision-making, tasks and responsibilities, how organisational actors are coordinated, monitored, rewarded or chastised, information channels and internal governance (Amin & Cohendet, 2000; Chia, 1997; Daft, 2007; Keyton, 2011; Mintzberg, 1980; Raisch, 2008; Roy, 2008). Organisational structure is, therefore, ‘rules and resources’, and thus structure both constrains and enables action (Giddens, 1984). Structure is ‘conceived of as a property of social systems, “carried” in reproduced practices embedded in time and space’ (Giddens, 1984, p. 170). Structure has, therefore, been referred to as the scaffolding for the ‘internal coherence’ of an organisation (Amin & Cohendet, 2000; Keyton, 2011).

Organisational structures are characterised by the desire for control. Both control and trust are used to reduce uncertainty regarding opportunistic behaviour and complexity (Bachmann, 2011; Tomlinson, 2005). However, Bachmann (2001) asserts that only control mechanisms reduce risk. Structures such as rules, procedures, performance monitoring and the use of rewards and sanctions exert control through formal power and may be applied to an individual or group, whereas trust is a social control based on shared values and norms (Shapiro, 1987; Tomlinson, 2005). The key difference is that control is based upon a negative assumption of the other person, indicating that without such controls in place, the other party is likely to behave opportunistically. Trust, however, is based on a positive assumption that the other party is willing and able to cooperate (Bachmann, 2011). Trust transmits positive relational signals, whereas control may be received by the ‘controlled’ party as sending a negative relational signal. However, the wider context (legislation or organisational governance) can exert system power (control) without impacting upon interpersonal trust signals between a subordinate and their supervisor/s, thereby reducing risk without invoking negative relational signals. In this manner, structure can support high trust levels (Bachmann, 2011; Six, 2007).

Early organisational tenets placed heavy reliance on the assumption of objectivity and compliance with a ‘moral order’ (Albrow, 1997; Moxnes, 2013; Whiteley, 2006). This evolved into the contemporary understanding of organisations as complex social phenomena (Chia, 2000; Keyton, 2011), acknowledging the power of organisational

actors. As organisations achieve goals through people, an organisation is recognised as a social arena in which the interaction of members is an organising force (Addleson, 2001; Amin & Cohendet, 2000; Keyton, 2011; Parsons, 1956). During such interactions, a culture – a ‘shared system of meanings dictat[ing] what we pay attention to, how we act and what we value’ (Trompenaars, 1995, p. 13) – is generated.

1.3.4 Significance of this study

Due to the multitude of benefits from trust between organisational members, leading organisations are actively engaged in attaining an optimal level of trust (Lacy et al., 2011). However, ‘[c]urrent trust research literature is plagued with contradictory findings’ (Olsen & Olsen, 2012, p. 257). There has been little research integrating interpersonal trust factors with context, particularly regarding the contexts of uncertainty, vulnerability and stress (Mishra & Mishra, 2013) or the organisational structure (Bachmann, 2011; Dirks, 2000; Li et al., 2012; Mishra & Mishra, 2013). There is therefore both industry need and scholarly significance arising from the proposed research. Researchers also note a lack of research on employees’ leaders other than their immediate supervisor (Brandebo et al., 2013). Another point of significance is the absence of trust research regarding blue-collar employees. Therefore, data resulting from this research will be: (1) valuable academically to compare the trust antecedents between blue-collar and white-collar employees; and (2) of practical value to organisations regarding the trust needs of organisational actors.

1.4 Research Methodology

1.4.1 Philosophy

This research addresses the concept ‘trust’ on the basis that trust is not a stable construct and is inconsistent over locations and time. The philosophical stance of this study is therefore one of ‘becoming’, wherein trust is considered an emergent and dynamic response to the interactions of organisational actors and their internal cognitions (Tedlock, 2011).

1.4.2 Theoretical perspective

This research takes the theoretical perspectives of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenological studies aim to elicit the ‘lived experience’ of those with first-hand experience of the research issue (Creswell et al., 2007). Symbolic interactionism aims to elicit the beliefs and meanings participants hold about and ascribe to these experiences, which in this study, are the experiences, beliefs and meanings regarding trust.

Symbolic interactionism is based on three assumptions (Blumer, 1969, p 5).

1. Behaviour emanates from the meaning an individual has ascribed to physical objects, institutions, other people or their actions.
2. Meaning arises from social interactions i.e. the actor interacting with others.
3. Meanings are fluid and may be adjusted as an individual further interprets the meaning; the ‘actor interacting with himself’ (Blumer, 1969, p. 5).

1.4.3 Ontology

The research ontology articulates what is considered to be ‘reality’ (Creswell, 2013). For this study, two contrasting ontological perspectives were considered: positivism and constructivism. Positivism has benefits of being parsimonious, applying scientific methods to ensure validity and reliability and displaying strength through numbers (Whiteley, 2012). However, the foundational criterion is that the object of the study is factual, static and observable or apprehensible in some way (Lincoln et al., 2011; Yilmaz, 2013). In contrast, a constructivist ontology understands ‘reality’ to be co-constructed, subjective, multiple, and specific to time and place (Lincoln et al., 2011).

Scholars consider trust to be contextually based (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Pirson & Malhotra, 2011; Rousseau et al., 1998), which suggests that constructivism is an appropriate ontology for the present research. Additionally, this study cannot claim that issues relating to trust in this research context (local government and blue-collar workers) are already known. This study has therefore adopted a constructivist ontology.

Table 1.1 Basic beliefs of alternative inquiry paradigms

	Positivist	Constructivist/Interpretivist
Ontology <i>What is the nature of reality</i>	Naïve realism <i>Belief in a single, objective and tangible ‘truth’ which can be studied and measured.</i>	Relativist <i>Realities are co-constructed, specific to the environment (time and place) and thus, multiple.</i>
Focus of interest	What is general, average and representative.	What is specific, unique and deviant.
Epistemology <i>What is accepted as ‘knowledge’; the relationship between the researcher and that being researched</i>	Objectivist/Dualist <i>The researcher has a neutral role in the research. As an ‘[o]bjective reality exists beyond the human mind’ (Weber, 2004, p. iv), the researcher and the subject being studied are independent (dualism).</i>	Subjectivist/Transactional <i>Findings are a co-creation from the interaction (transaction) between the subjects and researcher. Knowledge is socially constructed, rather than ‘discovered’. Researchers must understand the social context in which the data are produced to accurately reflect what the data mean to the study.</i>
Methodology <i>What is the process of the research</i>	Experimental/manipulative <i>Verification of hypotheses, primarily using quantitative methods. Replicable data are valued.</i>	Hermeneutical/dialectical <i>Qualitative methods used to elicit and refine hermeneutic data which is compared dialectically to gain understanding of the research phenomenon.</i>

Table adapted from Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 102-115 and Decrop, 2000, p. 337.

1.4.4 Epistemology

An interpretive epistemology understands that ‘social reality is a construction based upon the actor’s frame of reference within the setting’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 80). This is appropriate to the research question which compares *perceived* and *received* factors of trust between subordinates and supervisors (i.e. comparing meanings between organisational actors). The immediate context within which this study is conducted is also addressed as the scope of this research includes the organisational structure.

1.4.5 Methodology

This research follows a qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is based upon the assumption that human social interactions generate multiple beliefs, experiences

and perspectives (Connelly, 2011; Moustakas, 1994; Whiteley, 2012). Although qualitative studies encompass diverse forms of research, the uniting concept is that these practices ‘make the world visible’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). Qualitative methodology is therefore appropriate when the research question is interested in the ‘lived experiences’ of participants (Tufford & Newman, 2011), as is the case in this study. There are five features of qualitative research (Lofland et al., 2006; Yin, 2011):

1. examining and understanding the meanings and beliefs, in ‘real world conditions’ (Yin, 2011, p. 7) rather than laboratory or artificial environments;
2. representing the participants’ world view with integrity, undertaking precautions to minimise unintentional researcher bias;
3. including context in the research;
4. providing insight into human behaviour through inductive theories that emerge from the data; and
5. using multiple sources of data (which in this study, arise from the multiple research participants).

1.4.6 Design

The qualitative design principle underpinning this research is grounded theory (Glaser, 2002a). This design blends the ‘depth and richness of qualitative interpretive traditions with the logic, rigour and systematic analysis inherent in quantitative survey research’ (Walker & Myrick, 2006, p. 548). Qualitative studies, and particularly grounded research, emphasise data driving the emergent theory, rather than literature restricting classifications or concepts a priori (Cassell & Symon, 1999). A significant advantage of grounded research is that it is particularly suited to studies involving asymmetrical levels of power (Charmaz, 2011), a factor inherent in organisational studies such as this.

The grounded theory method incorporates researcher reflexivity throughout all the research process (Charmaz, 2011), to achieve ‘sincerity’ in the research and transparency of the researcher’s subjective biases (Tracy, 2010). Grounded theory ‘honours’ participants’ experiences relevant to the research question (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012), and through constant comparison of utterances, reveal participants ‘thoughts, ideas, reasoning, foresight, imagination, understanding, judgment,

deciding, choosing, evaluating, speculating, and numerous other mental processes’ (Meltzer, 2003, p. 253), thus facilitating the emergence of higher-level concepts from the data (Glaser, 2012). Grounded theory, which is intrinsically symbolic interactionist (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012), is appropriate for studying social systems such as those within organisations (Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Milliken & Schreiber, 2012; Parry, 1998; Suddaby, 2006).

The research design connects all elements of the research from the research question and objectives to the way data are collected, analysed, interpreted and results presented. An initial literature review ensured that the research was ‘theoretically informed, but not theoretically pre-formed’ (Charmaz, 2007, p. 80). As illustrated in Figure 1.6, this study was an iterative process, in which data collection and data analysis informed and influenced each other, according to grounded theory practice (Charmaz, 2011).

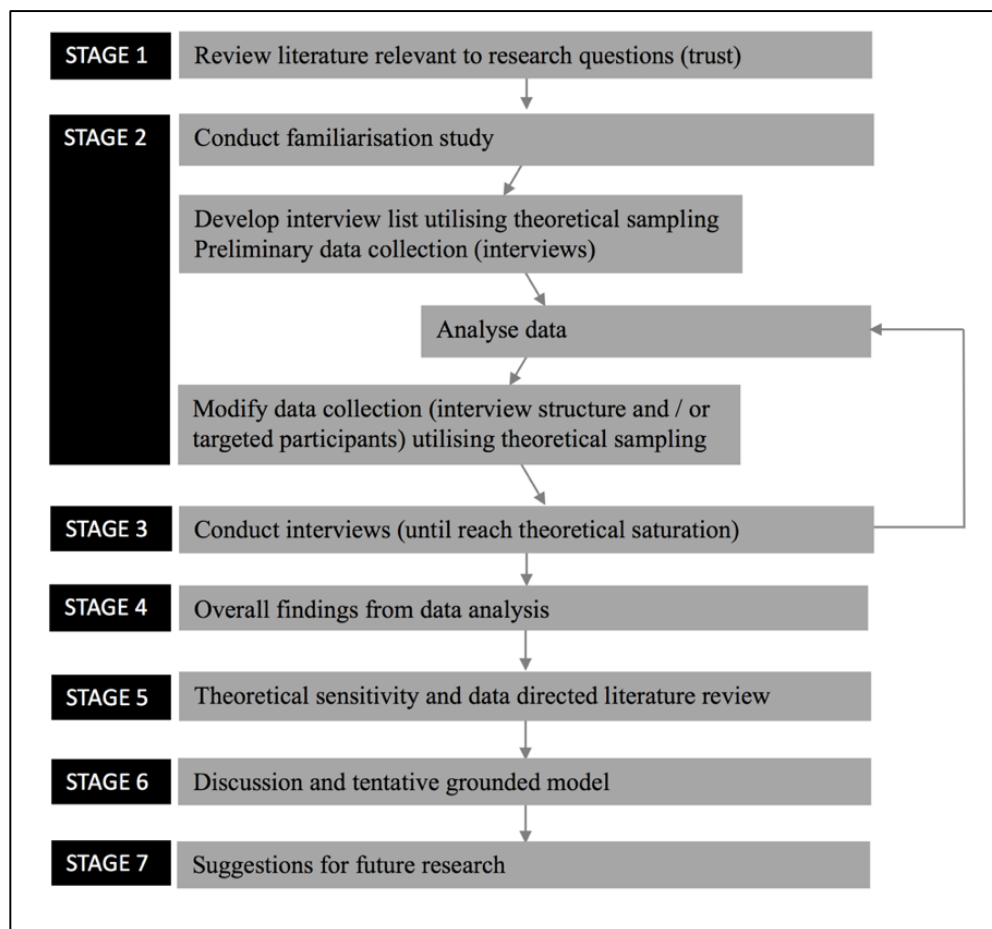


Figure 1.6 Stages of research (adapted from Whiteley, 2004)

1.4.7 Data collection

The data collection method employed was individual face-to-face in-depth interviews; these were conducted until saturation (Creswell, 2013). The advantage of such interviews is that they facilitate access to the subjective context, experiences, beliefs and perspectives of the participants, which is particularly appropriate when researching internally constructed issues (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011; Yin, 2011) such as trust. The interviews used dyadic social interaction and discourse to reveal the meanings assigned by interviewees by drawing upon their subjective experiences and exploring symbolic representations of objects or events.

Research interviews are classified on a continuum from structured to semi-structured to unstructured (Chadwick et al., 1984; Corbin & Morse, 2003; Whiteley et al., 2003). This research employed semi-structured interviews as the research emphasis was on understanding (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Semi-structured interview allowed ‘the subjects to organize their own descriptions, emphasizing what they themselves find important’ (Kvale, 1983, p. 173), while retaining focus on the research question. Interviews included the critical incident technique (Chell, 1998), as this is particularly suitable for eliciting data on trust affecting events and behaviours that stand out as being ‘best or ‘worst’ (Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012).

Purposeful sampling describes the process of targeting potentially ‘information-rich’ participants (Boeije, 2012; Coyne, 1997; Patton, 1990; Yin, 2011). This research used purposeful sampling to ensure representation from relevant hierarchical levels in the data. Theoretical sampling is a type of purposeful sampling (Boeije, 2012; Charmaz, 2011) and was used in this study after tentative categories began to emerge from the data. In this manner, the data determined which data to collect next (Boeije, 2012). Data collection occurred until data saturation. This is believed to occur generally after twelve interviews of a particular demographic (Guest et al., 2006), so it was tentatively estimated that there may be 60 interviews (see Table 1.2), although saturation occurred at 55 interviews for this study.

Table 1.2 Indicative number of people to be interviewed

Type of participant	Blue-collar	White-collar
Subordinate (A)	Approximately 12	Approximately 12
Subordinate's (A's) direct supervisor (B)	Approximately 12	Approximately 12
B's direct supervisor	Approximately 12 (as led both blue- and white-collar employees)	

Coding and analysis occurred concurrently throughout the data collection, facilitating the modification of questions where beneficial. Although the researcher conducted interviews within the industry in which the researcher was employed, academics note that there are no relationship-free interviews (King, 1994; Whiteley et al., 2003); '[i]ndeed the relationship is part of the research process, not a distraction from it' (Whiteley et al., 2003, p. 4). However, researchers highlight a concern regarding role clarity when the researcher may be known to a research participant in another role prior to the interview (Robley, 1995). Although the researcher did not know any interviewee prior to the research, due to the researcher being employed in the industry during the period of data collection, and following Robley's advice, the researcher emphasised and defined her researcher role prior to commencing each interview.

1.4.8 Data analysis and management

Data were analysed according to grounded theory systemic procedure. The unit of analysis was an utterance connected to the research question. Utterances become codes, which were categorised into sets of meaning and treated to constant comparison. Research was conducted in alignment with Charmaz's (2011) recommendations: comparing data to allow tentative codes to emerge, and then juxtaposing the data against the categories (groups of meaning). The data and codes were contrasted with these categories and revised accordingly. The categories were compared and grouped into higher level concepts, which were compared with one another as well as concepts from the literature. Data were managed by utilising the ethnographic software ATLAS.ti (Mac version 1.5.1).

1.4.9 Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 begins with the aim of the study, which was to advance understanding of interpersonal trust through research conducted within an Australian local government organisation. This was achieved by exploring supervisor–subordinate trust relationships with reference to the congruence of perceived and reported trust promoting or inhibiting behaviours. As context and signalling trust beliefs are highly relevant to trust, this study was also interested in how organisational structures supported or undermined supervisor and subordinate trust.

This chapter gives an overview of the research methodology, as an interpretive study adopting a constructivist and social constructionist ontology employing phenomenology and symbolic interactionist perspectives. Because terminology can vary according to context, a set of operational definitions chosen for use in this thesis was presented. The research questions and research objectives were also presented.

The background and a selective literature review around the context of the research question were discussed, focusing on trust and implications for the research context (Australian local government). The significance of the study, especially in terms of contributing to the body of knowledge of trust in Australian local government organisations was discussed. A particular contribution lies in the lack of previous research on trust in similar environments and, in particular, on both white-collar and blue-collar workers. A brief outline of the research methodology was presented with a fuller description provided in Chapter 3. Similarly, a preview of the research design was presented.

Chapter 2 is a critical literature review. It is presented in two parts. Part 1 presents trust literature and theories going into the study, allowing the researcher to be familiar with the leading theories in the field without adopting preformed theories to which the data might ‘fit’. Issues such as the lack of consensus upon the definition of trust, a brief synopsis of the foundations of trust research, and important concepts such as distrust, the mutual growth cycle of trust, signalling and reciprocity were discussed. A summary in tabular form of the academic literature on the trust antecedents for existing dyadic interpersonal relationships is presented. This is followed by a discussion of how organisational structures impacts interpersonal trust.

Part 2 of Chapter 2 exhibits theoretical sensitivity in relation to linking the data provided by the participants to existing theories, without being constrained by the received wisdom regarding trust in an organisational context. The trust antecedents found in the literature include the presence of integrity, consistency and reliability to support trust. However, according to this study's data, and particularly in terms of competence, *the lack* of these qualities supported trust in particular circumstances. Thus, an important derivation from the data was a particular lens or frame concerning attribution theory. The existing trust literature has raised attribution theory, although specific to trust repair. Throughout Part 2, similar insights propelled the researcher to be sensitive to particular theories or particular aspects of theories.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology for the study and demonstrates the strength of linkage between these elements. Specifically, this chapter discusses the philosophy (becoming), theoretical perspectives (phenomenology and symbolic interactionism), ontology (constructivist), epistemology (interpretivist), methodology (qualitative) and research design (grounded theory method). The selected type of grounded theory method, grounded research – a type of grounded theory method specific to research in an organisational context – is discussed according to each of the seven stages of grounded research.

Following this, the limitations of, and the ethical and rigour considerations applicable to, the study are discussed. The rigour, ethical and project risks are presented in tabular form, listing the risk, cause, consequence and actions taken in the study to mitigate the risks. The chapter concludes with an audit trail, which transparently explains the decisions and changes to research design and interview protocol made during the course of the research, plus excerpts of the researcher's reflexive journal. The journal is a recommended device for qualitative researchers to facilitate critical thinking and self-awareness for the researcher and to provide transparency and support replication and critique for readers to 'locate' the researcher within the study.

Chapter 4 presents the qualitative data (quotations relevant to the research questions) and the findings of the data analysis. This is undertaken through an explanation of the data analysis process and terms used, followed by findings of each research objective. For research objectives one and two, a summary of the findings in tabular form is presented. This facilitates a 'groundedness' comparison of the codes (quotations)

arising from white- and blue-collar research participants and comparison of trust antecedents of supervisors and subordinates. Venn diagrams illustrate the areas of disconnect between actual trust antecedents and perceived trust antecedents. A discussion of each sub-category occurs in conjunction with a figure transparently showing all data contained in each sub-category. The culmination of the findings of each research objective is a network diagram illustrating all the sub-categories, categories and concepts and their relationships.

Chapter 5 is the discussion chapter, in which the findings (discussed in Chapter 4) are compared to the extant trust literature (discussed in Chapter 2). Findings that extend or challenge the trust literature are expounded in more detail, drawing upon relevant research outside the trust literature. A key contribution from this study is the Stability Contingent Model of Trust, which is presented early in the chapter to presage the supporting evidence and explanation used to arrive at the model.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings for competence, particularly the novel finding that a lack of competence did not negatively impact trust if the trustor perceived that *competence was improving* (unstable) and *attributed the lack of competence to factors external to the trustee*, rather than lack of effort, which is an internal attribution. Attribution theory provided theoretical basis for explaining this novel finding.

A second novel finding explained by attribution theory was that if a supervisor failed to complete actions requested by a subordinate, the negative impact upon trust was ameliorated to the extent that the subordinate attributed external reasons (such as workload) for the non-completion.

The findings in relation to the under-researched area of blue-collar workers also produced a novel finding, namely, that career development supports white-collar subordinate trust in a supervisor, or individuals in a management role, but this trust antecedent of career development is not relevant to the blue-collar work context.

The data and findings of the impact of organisational structure upon trust are also discussed. These highlight that rather than just organisational structure, it is the *intersection of structure and individual representing the organisation* that impacts on interpersonal trust.

Collectively, the extant trust literature, these findings from the present study and attribution theory led to the development of a coherent, parsimonious but tentative ‘Stability Contingent Model’ of trust. The four elements identified in this study – the established trust dynamics from the trust literature of (1) benevolent intent and (2) competence, and attribution theory’s elements of (3) stability and (4) locus of causality – then became the basis of the trust model. The chapter concludes by presenting examples from the data that support and illustrate the tentative Stability Contingent Model of interpersonal trust, demonstrating varied trust outcomes resulting from different combinations of the trust dynamics. These separate examples are then brought together in a summary table for a more holistic overview of the tentative trust model.

The chapter concludes by providing recommendations for future research before highlighting and summarising the novel findings of this study.

Chapter 2. Critical Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Grounded theory researchers follow a quest of exploration and discovery regarding phenomena within the field of social science (Glaser, 2002a; Glaser & Strauss, 2006). However, before commencing a study, the grounded theory researcher must satisfy the twin requirements of (1) knowing relevant extant literature and the research context to minimise the risk that the data produced is not connected to theory, but yet (2) not becoming contaminated by a priori assumptions that may affect data collection or analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Meyerson et al., 1996; Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011). The actions taken by this researcher to support an agnostic stance on extant trust theories (the second requirement) are detailed in the next chapter (methodology). However, this chapter addressed the first grounded research requirement, providing an avenue for the researcher to undertake a critical literature review of trust research pertinent to this study's three research questions, in answer to the first grounded research requirement.

Part 1 of this chapter provides an overview of the extant trust literature, commencing with a discussion of trust definitions, assumptions, important associated concepts and trust antecedents. Part 1 concludes with a critical review of the trust literature in relation to organisational structures that may hinder or promote interpersonal trust within an organisation.

Part 2 of the chapter is the 'data-directed literature'. This section was added after analysis of the data and the comparison of this analysis with extant trust literature. Findings that differed from the trust literature were identified as novel themes, and explored through a literature review of theories from other disciplines. This data-directed literature provided a theoretical platform for the culmination of this study; the final chapter of this thesis (Chapter 5, 'Discussion') in which all elements (extant trust literature, this study's data, the data directed literature) contribute to an empirically sound, tentative trust model and directions for future research.

2.2 Part 1. Review of Trust Literature

2.2.1 What is trust and what is its impact within organisations?

Trust is a multilevel phenomenon that occurs at the micro, meso and macro levels and is relevant to all facets of our lives: personal, work and societal (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999; Choi & Han, 2011; Kramer, 1996; Rotter, 1980; Rousseau et al., 1998; Slovic, 1993). One can trust many things which involve expectations and predictability, such as the weather, people, organisations, material objects or railway schedules (Deutsch, 1958; Nooteboom & Six, 2003). However, the present research explores trust between people within an organisation. Deutsch (1958) labelled trust in other people ‘social trust’, while others refer to it as ‘interpersonal trust’ (Rotter, 1971; Zaheer et al., 1998). However, for the current study ‘trust in other people’ will simply be referred to as ‘trust’ unless to ensure clarity, the text requires the full descriptor of ‘interpersonal trust’. The *trustor* is the individual who places trust, and the *trustee* is the one being trusted (Tsfati & Cappella, 2016).

Trust is dynamic, a verb rather than a noun; Flores and Solomon (1998) declare that it would be more accurate to replace references of ‘trust’ with ‘trusting’. Although there has been multidisciplinary research on trust, there is yet to be a ‘coherent overall understanding’ (Möllering, 2017, p. 107). Castaldo et al. (2010, p. 657) observed that ‘[a]t present, we know much better what trust *does* than what trust *is*’ (emphasis in original).

This quandary is reflected in the lack of academic consensus on the definition of trust (De Jong et al., 2017; Kramer, 1999; PytlikZillig & Kimbrough, 2016). However, this study has utilised the trust definition articulated by Six (2007) which combines the most frequently cited definitions from Rousseau et al. (1998) and Mayer et al. (1995) (Siebert et. al, 2015; Six, 2007).

[T]rust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another party, based upon the expectation that the other will perform a particular action that is important [to the trustor]. (Six, 2007, p. 290)

Trust is, therefore, most commonly considered as a ‘state of mind’ of confident expectation, rather than an action (Beldad et al., 2010; Nooteboom, 2011; Rousseau et

al., 1998; Whitener et al., 1998), although one's actions can indicate trust levels (Hardin, 2002). However, some scholars advocate reconceptualising trust as a behaviour because: (1) a psychological state of trust may not translate to trust actions, in which case psychological trust is moot; (2) it is considered more appropriate to discuss trust by nations and organisations in a behavioural, rather than psychological, sense; and (3) from a sociological perspective, trust is a collective attribute rather than an individual psychological state (Brugger, 2015; De Jong et al., 2017; Lewis & Weigert, 1985a; Li et al., 2012).

Whether trust is considered an internal state or behavioural action, three conditions are implicit within the trust definition. The first is that there is a dependence, as the outcome favourable to the trustor cannot be achieved without relying upon the trustee (Meyerson et al., 1996; Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011). The second is that free choice exists for both parties (Gambetta, 2000; Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011; Zand, 1972). The *trustor*, whether an individual or group, is free to trust and rely upon another party to achieve a beneficial outcome for herself, or to find an alternative path, even if this means a compromised outcome. The potential *trustee* has freedom of choice to pursue different courses of actions, which may result in a range of impacts upon the trustor, from harm through to benefit.

Before discussing the third trust condition, a brief explanation of risk is required, drawing upon judgement and decision-making literature (Loewenstein et al., 2001; Lyon et al., 2015). Risk is the potential for change; this change may either bring harm or benefit to a stakeholder (Kaplan & Garrick, 1981). Risk assessments involve a calculation over three dimensions: (1) what are the possible outcomes, (2) what is the likelihood of these outcomes occurring, and (3) what are the potential consequences (Kaplan & Garrick, 1981).

Returning to the trust literature, the third condition inherent to the trust definition is risk. This is where the distinction between trust as a psychological willingness or action does make a subtle difference. The psychological state of trust does not incur risk itself (Mayer et al., 1995), whereas trusting actions do. In either case, however, trust is only relevant in *situations* of risk (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Li, 2007; Meyerson et al., 1996; Righetti & Finkenauer, 2011; Rousseau et al., 1998). In other

words, trust is only relevant in circumstances where there is opportunity to benefit the trustor.

The risk resulting from *behaviourally enacting* trust arises from information gaps and uncertainty in predicting other's future behaviour (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999). This would appear to impact all three dimensions of making a risk calculation. However, others contend that trust is acting *as if* there were no risk, in which case there is no conscious risk assessment (Lewis & Weigert, 1985a). Lagerspetz (1998) explains that the discrepancy between perceived levels of risk becomes evident comparing a first person (trustor) perspective with that of a third-person perspective. This point is also made by Baier (1996):

Trusting is taking not-so-calculated risks, which are not the same as ill-judged ones. Part of what it is to trust is not to have too many thoughts about possible betrayals. They would turn trust into mistrust. (Baier, 1996, p. 196)

However, research has revealed the risks concerned with trust. Broadly, the trustor's vulnerability arises from the other party potentially failing to act (passive betrayal), or acting against (active betrayal) the trustor's best interests (Gambetta, 2000). Laboratory experiments suggest the main threats to cooperative behaviour are a trustor's fear of being victimised and a trustee failing to meet trust expectations through greed (Coombs, 1973; Hwang & Burgers, 1997) and a short-term perspective (Boone et al., 2002). Note that, while cooperation does not equate to trust (as is discussed in more detail later), trust research also indicates that opportunistic self-interest (greed) and taking a short-term perspective are also threats to trust (Six & Sorge, 2008). Research by Hwang and Burgers (1997) also indicates that an absence of fear equates to the trusting party fully intending to cooperate with the other party, no matter the level of betrayal risk. However, the potential for greed (by the other party) is omnipresent at all levels of risk in trusting contexts.

Trust is complex and dynamic; it can be an outcome, cause or moderator (Möllering, 2018; Rousseau et al., 1998). Trust levels and which antecedents are most salient vary according to subject matter and relationship maturity (Ali Babar et al., 2007; Choi & Han, 2011; Schoorman et al., 2007). Trust is considered highly contextual (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Pirson & Malhotra, 2011; Rousseau et al., 1998). Given the

dynamic nature and extensive impact of trust, it is not surprising that trust has been described as ‘one of the most fascinating and fundamental social phenomena, yet at the same time one of the most elusive and challenging concepts one could study’ (Bijlsma-Frankema & Rousseau, 2012, p. 1).

Trust research within academia is widely considered to have its origins with social psychologist Morton Deutsch’s (1958) article, ‘Trust and Suspicion’ (Lewicki, 2018; Simpson, 2007a, Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009). However, after the initial flurry of interest, literature focusing upon trust was largely absent from research literature for nearly twenty years, until the late 1970s (Gillespie, 2017).

It has been conjectured that the lack of scholarly focus on trust during these two decades may have resulted from two factors. Firstly, as academia is embedded in society, the environment influences the selection of a research issue. Management research in the 1950s and 1960s had a focus on behaviouralism, with the goal of explaining observable phenomena. It was not until the 1970s that research shifted to cognitive issues to explore and explain intentions, rational thinking and sense-making (Van de Ven & Ring, 2006).

The second reason was that during this intervening period, trust was considered weak or unnecessary within organisations (Zand, 2016). Noted trust researcher Dale Zand reflected upon his observations of organisations in the United States from the 1950s and 1960s through to the present day.

At that time, most managers were wary and contemptuous of trust. To managers, trust meant being gullible, soft-minded, readily manipulated, and easily exploited ... [however, although trust once was] an amorphous concept of limited interest, trust is now treated as a critical factor in social relations at all levels, from dyads to nation states. (Zand, 2016, pp. 64, 68)

Since then, research on trust has grown in accordance with contemporary understanding of the benefits it brings to organisations. Trust is now understood to confer multiple tangible and intangible benefits to organisations. Trust is considered a social capital resource for organisations in the same way assets and finances are resources enabling an organisation to achieve its goals (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999;

Dovey, 2009; Knack & Keefer, 1997). Like other forms of social capital, networks and social norms, trust increases with use and wanes with disuse (Putnam, 1993).

Within organisations, trust facilitates higher outcome performance (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008; Crossley et al., 2013), promotes relationships and cooperation (La Porta et al., 1997) and increases employee satisfaction (Matzler & Renzl, 2006). High trust in management increases employees' openness to organisational change (Devos et al., 2007). Trust also facilitates resource sharing and increases the depth, breadth and efficiency of knowledge transfer (Juvina et al., 2013; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Raab et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2007) thereby improving knowledge creation (Mooradian et al., 2006).

These factors support lower employee turnover (Davis et al., 2000; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Vaughan-Smith, 2013) and facilitate an innovative culture (Dovey, 2009; Knack & Keefer, 1997; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Ng, 2013). Trust within and between organisations increases the speed of transactions, thereby increasing organisational agility (Molina-Morales et al., 2011).

However, due to power inequities, hierarchical controls and conflicting goals between various organisational members, there are many challenges to forming, signalling and maintaining interpersonal trust within an organisation (Bligh & Kohles, 2013; Dirks & Skarlicki, 2007; Kramer, 1996; Schilke et al., 2015). In an organisational environment of distrust, time (resources) is spent on 'decoding' messages, double-checking to confirm truthfulness of statements (Abrams et al., 2003) and performing additional work to ensure self-protection (Dunea, 1998; Verbarg et al., 2017). 'Large amounts of time, energy, and resources are spent by employees protecting themselves or avoiding or undermining the efforts of others' (Schindler & Thomas, 1993, p. 563). Innovative ideas are often left unspoken in a distrustful environment, as employees are unsure of the consequences of voicing novel solutions (Abrams et al., 2003).

However, there is considered to be an optimal level of trust for organisations, beyond which there is a diminishing return on the cost of behaviours and structures supporting trust (Wicks et al., 1999). Too much trust can also depress critical thinking leading to group-think, a risk of opportunistic actions by others and insufficient monitoring (Erdem, 2003; Molina-Morales et al., 2011). Academics advocate that organisational

investment in trust should be considered from a cost–benefit point of view (McEvily et al., 2003; Molina-Morales et al., 2011). Beccerra and Gupta (1999, p. 182) comment that ‘trust is desirable as long as it provides social value but not in and of itself.’

Industry acknowledges this view, with leading organisations actively and strategically looking for the ‘sweet spot’ in their trust endeavours (Lacy et al., 2011). This includes identifying relevant metrics to capture trust levels for their stakeholders, internal and external, as an organisational trust index. Trust metrics can include formal or informal stakeholder surveys (of employees, customers, regulators and suppliers), employee retention rates and analysis to understand stakeholder’s trust issues (Lacy et al., 2011).

The benefits afforded by trust have become increasingly important to the success of contemporary organisations (Mooradian et al., 2006; Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000), as the environment in which they operate has become faster and simultaneously more fragmented, uncertain and complex (Lewicki et al., 1998). However, these changes have compounded the challenge of building and maintaining intra-organisational trust.

Globalization, workplace diversity, increased awareness of cultural differences, downsizing, delayering, the call for (and in some cases the reality of) increased workplace democracy, international networks, complex alliance, information technologies, and decentralized decision making are only some of the events and processes during which trust assumes significant importance. Trust within and across organizations ... is predictive of whether or not an organization will remain viable. (Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000, p. 35)

2.2.2 Comparison of trust antecedents

A direct comparison of trust models is challenging. The literature has varied in units and level of analysis used (De Jong et al., 2017; Shapiro, 1987). For example, a macro view was taken by Mayer et al. (1995) in their ‘integrity, ability, benevolence’ (ABI) trust model, while Butler (1991) took a more detailed approach with his 10-factor model (integrity, consistency, promise fulfilment, fairness, receptivity, openness and discreteness, competence, loyalty and availability).

However, as Hardin (2002, p. 9) succinctly articulates, trust can be conceived in three parts: ‘A trusts B to do X’. ‘B’ is the target of the trust and ‘X’ is the outcome to be achieved. Similarly, the antecedents of interpersonal trust have been broadly

conceived along two dimensions relating to the trustee ('B') and their competence in the action ('X'). These broad trust antecedent dimensions are:

- the belief in the *trustworthy intentions* (willingness) of another party; and
- the confidence and reliance in the other party's *ability* to achieve the desired outcome (Chang et al., 2006; Cook & Wall, 1980; McAllister, 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993).

Colquitt et al. (2007) referred to these behaviours as 'will-do' and 'can-do'.

Drawing together the two broad trust antecedents, benevolent intent and ability, with vulnerability and risk, Das and Teng (2001) state that, in strategic alliances, there are two types of risk: relational risk (relating to good intentions in a dyad) and performance risk (relating to competence).

Research indicates that although a person's trust in another party's intent and trust in their competence may be causally connected, these two modes of trust have a distinct manner of operation, antecedents and consequences (McAllister, 1995).

The following sections discuss the trust antecedents under these two broad trust antecedents of 'intent' and 'competence'.

2.2.2.1 Perceptions of other party's intent

The philosopher Løgstrup (1956/1997) claims three potentially overlapping reasons for individuals to perform an action to benefit another: (1) the character of the person performing the action, (2) the cause, and (3) the reciprocal trust between the parties and because an explicit or implicit promise was made. Indeed, it has been claimed that from a trustor's perspective, the emotional bond a trustor feels for the trustee encompasses both a moral judgement of, and belief in, the trustee (Wicks et al., 1999). Thus, in the following discussion, trustor beliefs in the moral character of the trustee (the integrity, consistency, honesty and reliability) and the emotional relational bond (benevolence, dedication, respect, openness, norm acceptability and shared values) are collectively classified as related to a trustor's belief in the trustworthy intentions of the other party.

2.2.2.1.1 Integrity

Mayer et al. (1995, p. 719) defined integrity as ‘the trustor’s perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable’. However, what may be an ‘acceptable principle’ for one individual may not be so for another. Scholars have described ‘integrity’ as problematic in relation to trust models, being a subjective concept with multiple meanings (Clark & Payne, 1997; Levine & Schweitzer, 2015).

The literature has frequently identified several trust antecedents that may be considered under the broad banner of integrity; these include honesty (Gabarro, 1978; Muethel & Hoegl, 2012), consistency (Butler, 1991; Gabarro, 1978; Mishra, 1996) and reliability/dependability (Butler, 1991; McAllister, 1995; Mishra, 1996; Muethel & Hoegl, 2012; Wasti et al., 2011). These factors appear to be consistent antecedents of trust over different cultural contexts, so have been argued to be etic, that is, universal, facets of trust (Muethel & Hoegl, 2012). Interestingly, the comparable Chinese word for trust is a compound word, ‘xin-ren’ which encapsulates the aforementioned trust antecedents under the integrity banner. ‘Xin’ highlights sincerity (honesty), and ‘ren’ is a reference to reliability and dependability (Chua et al., 2009).

It is noted that while benevolent intent is specific to a trustor-trustee relationship, integrity (and competence) are more general in nature, which is suggestive of why benevolence, but not integrity, is claimed to have a significant impact upon the perceived obligation to reciprocate trust (Zapata et al., 2013).

2.2.2.1.2 Consistency

Consistency is considered a relevant factor in trust assessments, as an individual’s trustworthiness can fluctuate depending upon context (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999; Mayer et al., 1995; Wasti et al., 2011). Consistent behaviour therefore supports greater confidence in generalising observed behaviour over a wider context of situations (Whitener et al., 1998).

Rempel et al. (1985) conducted a survey on trust between dating and married couples. Interestingly, their results indicated that rather than predictability (consistency), it was lack of unpredictability that was important to interpersonal trust.

2.2.2.1.3 Honesty

The relationship between a person's display of honest behaviour and an observer's judgement regarding his/her honesty is hierarchically restrictive; in other words, there is an asymmetry between the range of behaviours at either extreme (Fiske et al., 2007; Rothbart & Park, 1986). Individuals considered dishonest may engage in both honest and dishonest behaviours (Rothbart & Park, 1986). Therefore a few instances of 'honest' behaviour are generally not considered indicative of honesty or dishonesty; one must *consistently* behave honestly to be classed as 'honest' (Gidron et al., 1993; Rothbart & Park, 1986). Gidron et al. (1993) explain the high requirement to meet the 'honest' label by noting that people behave honestly most of the time, so describing someone as 'honest' if it only meant 'reasonably honest' would apply to nearly everyone and, hence, would not be a useful descriptor.

2.2.2.1.4 Reliability

'Reliability' has been identified as a trust antecedent by many trust scholars (e.g. McAllister, 1995; Mishra, 1996; Wasti et al., 2011). It has been defined as a 'consistency between words and actions. It entails following through when you say you are going to do something' (Mishra et al., 2011, p. 42). It therefore equates to Butler's (1991) trust antecedent of 'promise fulfilment'.

2.2.2.1.5 Norm acceptability and shared values

The trustor may make assumptions to inform a trust assessment that are grounded in the perceived similarity of the other party (Beccerra & Gupta, 1999). De Jong and Dirks (2012) called on self-perception theory, a variant of attribution theory, to explain that 'individuals use their own past behaviour as a source of information for understanding their own attitudes and beliefs towards others' (p. 394).

This is supported by research that indicates that, when a group is homogeneous, individuals make predictions regarding other people's behaviour based upon their own behaviour to a greater extent than in heterogeneous groups (Sapienza et al., 2007). Research that digitally manipulated the appearance of potential trust partners found participants had higher trust levels in those physically similar to themselves (DeBruine, 2002). Stereotypes and heuristics may have a role in making assumptions that shared group membership, such as race or profession, is more likely to indicate

the other party has same values or traits, or will be more inclined to support a similar other (Foddy & Yamagishi, 2009; Lumineau, 2017).

However, what is particularly relevant to trust within organisations is that norms, and therefore norm acceptability, are not static; for example, the socialisation process within organisations may shape the new employees to conform to localised norms (Fine & Holyfield, 1996).

2.2.2.1.6 Openness

In relation to trust, openness has been described as ‘mental accessibility, a willingness to share ideas and information freely and accurately’ (Clark & Payne, 1997, p. 208). This definition encompasses two components: (1) a yielding aspect of being open to influence (openness in receiving a message), and (2) transparency and proactive information sharing (openness in sending a message) (Muethel & Hoegl, 2012; Stull, 1978). While honesty and the transparency component of openness have sometimes been used interchangeably in the literature, as both relate to information sharing, honesty pertains to truthfulness (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2009) while transparency relates to the ease of access and accessibility of meaning (Birkinshaw, 2006; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2009, Hood, 2010).

Whether openness is a trust antecedent and, if so, in what contexts, is an unresolved issue. However historically, this has not received as much attention as larger conceptual issues, such as the definition of trust and whether trust and distrust are separate constructs. In part, the lack of discussion regarding openness may be influenced by Mayer et al.’s (1995) meta-analysis of trust literature. Although Mayer et al. identified four articles noting openness as a trust antecedent, it was not included in their resulting ‘ABI’ (ability, benevolence, integrity) trust model. Subsequently, those studies using this seminal trust model as a base (e.g. Kiffin-Petersen & Cordery, 2003; Krot & Lewicka, 2012; Parra et al., 2011) neglected openness as a potential factor to explore.

However, it is also notable that a meta-analysis of trust in leadership literature over four decades (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) also lacked specific mention of openness, although more recent leadership studies (e.g. Norman et al., 2010; Trivedi et al., 2010; Werbel & Henriques, 2009) have included openness. Drawing upon Luhmann (1979),

Frederiksen (2016) discusses how familiarity and interpersonal relationships have been eroded through modern complexity. As increased interconnectedness makes cause, effect and attribution more difficult (Bekkers & Thaens, 2005; Sijderlund & Vilgon, 1993), explicit trustworthiness communication may have become more important to discern other's intentions, and thus more important to trust. Following this argument, it is feasible that openness and transparency may be more socially relevant than in the past.

One of the earlier trust models identifying openness as a trust antecedent was Gabarro's (1978) qualitative three-year field study (interviews and observations) of four new organisational presidents and their key subordinates. This study found openness to be a trust antecedent for subordinate trust in the leader, but not the leader trust in the subordinate.

Wasti et al.'s (2011) qualitative research in China and Turkey explored and compared trust in a supervisor, peer and subordinate. They found that when a subordinate demonstrated openness it was perceived by a supervisor as an accurate explanation, thus indicating honesty. For this reason, Wasti et al. bundled openness into their definition of integrity in their trust model.

Research by Muethel and Hoegl (2012) to investigate and compare how different cultures construe trust may indicate why openness has been included or ignored within trust theories. Their study involved individual interviews of 45 German and Chinese managers from 13 companies. During the interview, participants were asked to consider 16 values identified in the literature as important to trust: honesty, credibility, morality, benevolence, carefulness, goodwill, competence, expertness, reliability, responsiveness, predictability, dependability, openness, shared understanding, dynamism and personal attraction. Participants identified the four least important values and then discussed the remaining 12 values, providing their interpretations, examples of behaviours and ranked these values. The results indicated that openness was highly salient to trust for the German participants, whereas it was negligibly important to the Chinese participants. Muethel and Hoegl proposed that this trust antecedent is contingent upon context, with openness salient within cultures characterised by high uncertainty avoidance. Their data also indicated that Germans lauded openness and proactive disclosure, including presenting displeasing

information and discussing negative incidents. This contrasted with data from Chinese participants which indicated that absolute truth telling may be harmful to others. In the Chinese context, social sensitivity and care for others were paramount. Additionally, while German participants characterised openness as accessible information, Chinese participants described openness as having an open mind; being open to others' ideas and influence, and embracing a willingness to compromise.

Yamagishi and Kakiuchi (2001) posit that when there is meagre information about the trustworthiness of another party, people fall back upon their default level of trust (generalised trust). Accordingly, it has been theorised that when a party is more open (in depth and/or quantity of discussions) this additional information facilitates a more confident trust evaluation (Sapienza et al., 2007). Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) trust model posits one stage of trust as knowledge-based trust; this knowledge is built from repeated interactions, observation and 'regular communication ... [which facilitates] ability to think like and react like the other' (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995, p. 150). Taken together, these notions suggest that openness (sharing information) has greater value for building a confident trust assessment in the nascent stages of a relationship. However, Pirson and Malhotra's (2011) findings from empirical research contradict this.

Pirson and Malhotra's (2011) study found transparency was a significant predictor of existing, deep relationships relating to employee trust in the organisation (operationalised as the management team). The same study found little evidence that transparency (openness) was a relevant trust antecedent for 'shallow' or external relationships such as customers or investors in an organisation. Pirson and Malhotra posited that their data reflected the relative value that these different organisational stakeholders placed upon information and transparency. If one bears in mind that trust is not static (Flores & Solomon, 1998; Jagd & Fuglsang, 2016), there is rationale for extending their theory to explain why those with shallow relationships do not appear to value openness as much as those with deep relationships. Rather than salience being correlated with the *current* depth of the relationship, the degree of openness may be important for those wishing a deep relationship *in the future*, by deepening or retaining a current deep relationship. Similarly, stakeholder management suggests that concretely identifiable stakeholders (such as individual employees) in comparison to

amorphous groups (such as ‘the stakeholders’) create a distinction between those whose interests are specific to the organisation and those who are ‘merely interested’ (Ackermann & Eden, 2011, p. 191).

In conclusion, openness appears to be a challenging aspect to study in relation to trust. It is sometimes confounded with honesty and thus integrity (Wasti et al., 2011). Openness has emic, that is, local definition depending upon cultural context, being interpreted as either as transparency (open sharing of information) or openness to influence (Muethel & Hoegl, 2012). The salience of openness varies upon the depth of a relationship (Pirson & Malhotra, 2011) and organisational role (Gabarro, 1978; Schindler & Thomas, 1993). Compounding the issue, openness is a noted outcome of trust (Abrams et al., 2003; Juvina et al., 2013; Molina-Morales et al., 2011; Raab et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2007), and impacts other trust antecedents of benevolence and honesty (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2009), confounding its role as a trust antecedent. Additionally, the salience of openness may have increased over the last decades (Frederkisen, 2016; Luhmann, 1979/2017) in which case, it has been a ‘moving target’ for research.

2.2.2.1.7 Respect

‘Respect’ as a trust antecedent arose in relation to subordinate trust in a supervisor. Clark’s (1993) exploratory study interviewed 44 coal miners regarding trust in their managers. Other than the present study, Clark’s (1993) and the subsequent research by Clark and Payne (1997) appear to be the only other research specifically exploring trust in relation to blue-collar workers. The findings of the 1993 study indicated that in addition to those trust antecedents previously identified by the literature, namely integrity, competence, consistency, fairness, loyalty and openness, a manager’s respect towards a colliery workman was an additional trust antecedent within the blue-collar context. However, the subsequent survey-based research of 398 colliery workers indicated that while blue-collar subordinates may use the word ‘respect’ frequently in relation to trust, the word was ‘interpreted by the respondents as loyalty, fairness or consistency, and openness’ (Clarke & Payne, 1997, p. 219).

However, within career (human resources) literature, it has been noted that for blue-collar workers, ‘status politics’ is salient (Thomas, 1996) suggesting that the blue-collar work context demonstrates collectivist-like cultural traits.

Wasti et al.’s (2011) study of trust within the collectivist cultures of China and Turkey also found that in relation to subordinate trust in a supervisor, treating a subordinate with respect and not ‘looking down on them’ was a trust antecedent. Within collectivist cultures, people consider themselves in the context of cohesive in-groups and their interdependence with others (Hofstede & Bond, 1998; Triandis, 1999). Thus, within a collectivist culture, signals of social standing are salient. However, unlike Clark’s (1993) study, which found respect entwined with the trustworthiness characteristics of the trustee, Wasti et al. (2011) found ‘respect’ demonstrated benevolence and, thus, was a function of the relationship between trustee and trustor. Tyler & Lind (1992) concur that respect is a subset of benevolence, asserting that the level of respect indicates the status one party accords the other. In contrast, disrespect demonstrates a threatening attitude (Tyler & Lind, 1992), triggering a self-protection response with the potential to escalate into an overt conflict between the parties (Wolf, 2011).

‘Respect’ as a trust antecedent has therefore been variously considered as entwined with trustworthiness characteristics of the trustee (Clark, 1993) or as a function of the relationship between trustee and trustor (Wasti et al., 2011). However, it is revealing that those studies that have implicated respect as a possible trust antecedent have been in contexts where one’s social standing is particularly pertinent; the blue-collar context (Thomas, 1996) and nations of collectivist cultures (Hofstede & Bond, 1998; Triandis, 1999). Social norms within group orientation (a ‘we’ consciousness) contexts, such as social face and gift exchange, have developed to clearly signal benevolent motives (Choi & Han, 2011; Doney et al., 1998). Triandis (1999) also suggested that within such cultures there is an emphasis on norms (which are group beliefs) over attitudes (individual beliefs). So, in cultures of group orientation, the literature suggests the coupled effect – wherein ‘respect’ as an indicator of a party’s intent is highly salient to the perceiver – and the in-group norms facilitate the perceiver’s deciphering of intent.

2.2.2.1.8 Benevolence and dedication

Benevolence is ‘the extent to which the trustee is perceived to act for the benefit of the trustor, instead of purely “egocentric profit motive”’ (Gilstrap & Collins, 2012, p. 153). To be benevolent towards another party is to care for her interests and wellbeing, and to act accordingly (Lewicki & Polin, 2013). Behaviours such as courtesy and respect for the other party, loyalty, active listening and treating the other party’s views as legitimate, and not provoking anger or distress are consistent with perceived benevolence (Butler, 1991; Lewicki & Polin, 2013). There is wide consensus in the literature that benevolence is a trust antecedent (e.g. Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995; McAllister, 1995; Schilke et al., 2015; Six, 2005), although it has sometimes been conceptualised in other terms, such as ‘concern’ (Mishra, 1996).

The term ‘affect-based trust’ takes the trustor’s perspective in relation to benevolence. It refers to the emotional aspect of trust, including friendship and empathy (Nooteboom, 2002).

... a deep affective sense of trust is recognized as persons becoming partners in the particular collective reality they are constructing ... trust appears to be antecedent to, a consequent of, and an emergent from the process of social exchange. (Lewis & Weigert, 1985b, p. 466)

Nooteboom (2002) and Six (2005) include benevolence as a trust antecedent, but also add that dedication is a separate trust antecedent. ‘Dedication’ is the resolution and attention applied to the trustor and actions that benefit the trustor. Together, benevolence and dedication capture not only the positive direction but also the resilience and strength of benevolent intent in the face of potentially conflicting interests.

Benevolence appears to be a trust antecedent relevant across cultures. Research within America and China found a positive correlation between social distance, trust and trustworthy behaviour (Buchan & Croson, 2004). Further support comes from Wasti et al.’s (2011) trust research within Turkey and China, which highlighted the primacy of benevolence to trust.

Hardin (2002) believes there is no trust without some form of relationship:

[T]rust is relational. That is to say, my trust of you depends on our relationship, either directly through our ongoing interaction or indirectly through intermediaries and reputational effects. If we have no or only a passing relationship, we are not in a trusting relationship. (Hardin, 2002, p. 3)

Hardin (2002) proposed a theory of encapsulated trust. This occurs when one party values a continuing relationship with a second party, thus has a vested interest in supporting the second party's goals. However, encapsulated trust does not refer to when parties' interests simply align; there must be an underlying desire by the parties to perpetuate their relationship. As noted by Nooteboom (2002) for trustworthiness to be ascribed, '[f]avourable actions have to be intended' (p. 98).

Within the organisational context, research indicates that a leader signals benevolence through demonstrating care for her employees by supporting their growth and development; for example, by (Kramer, 1996; Six, 2005):

- coaching and mentoring the employees; or
- providing employees with the opportunity to correct mistakes; or
- supporting employees career development.

2.2.2.2 Perceptions of other party's competence to achieve the desired outcome

Competence is the 'group of skills, competencies, and characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain' (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 717). Although competence is also referred to as 'ability' in the trust literature, 'ability' may be perceived to be inclusive of the environment, as in whether one is 'able' to successfully complete a task despite of, or perhaps due to, factors external to the individual. However, in references to 'ability', the literature does not appear to refer to the environment of the trustee, therefore, when excluding the impact of the context and referring solely to internal traits and experience, this thesis utilises the more specific term of 'competence'.

Competence is domain-specific (Mayer et al., 1995). An individual may be competent in relation to a particular task, yet not competent in another task due to lack of aptitude, training and/or experience (Bell et al., 2002). This implies that competence may

change over time as an individual completes training and/or gains experience. However, a change to trust as a result of changes in competence does not appear to have been noted in trust research, perhaps as there are few longitudinal trust studies.

Like honesty, individuals apply a hierarchically restrictive schema to judgements of another's competence. An observation of skilful behaviour tends to generate a belief that the person is accomplished at the task (Reeder & Fulks, 1980). However, an observation of a person failing, or completing a task poorly does not necessarily result in a belief that the person is incompetent; rather people appear to understand it may be due to situational factors, and categorising a person as unskilful therefore tends to require more than one 'bad' performance (Fiske et al., 2007; Reeder & Fulks, 1980). Therefore, a positive perception of a person's competence can be drawn from as little as one observation of skilful behaviour, whereas a realisation of someone's lack of skill comes following knowledge of multiple instances of inadequate performance.

2.2.3 Distrust

Frederiksen (2012) specifies that 'mistrust' relates to generalised trust (the trust in strangers), whereas 'distrust' relates to particularised trust (trust in a particular person with whom one has a relationship). Early trust research conceptualised trust and distrust as being either end of a continuum (e.g. Rotter, 1967). Distrust was perceived to be the absence of trust; the mid-region of this continuum was debated as either 'trust agnostic', 'no trust' or 'no distrust' (Ullmann-Margalit, 2004).

However, academics are increasingly are positing trust and distrust as separate constructs (Reimann et al., 2017; Sitkin & Roth, 1993; Van De Walle & Six, 2014). Supporting this, behavioural genetics research on identical and non-identical twins found trust, but not distrust, to be heritable, with 30 per cent and zero per cent estimated heritability respectively (Reimann et al., 2017). Scholars have also noted the asymmetry of time required to either build or break trust, aligning with the folkloric saying, 'trust comes on foot and departs on horseback' (Nooteboom, 2002, p. 98).

Functional neuroimaging (fMRI) suggests a biological foundation for the confusion regarding whether trust and distrust are separate or different constructs. Trust and distrust activate the same and different areas of the brain depending upon the trust antecedent (Dimoka, 2010). Different areas of the brain were shown to be activated

from emotive evaluations. Benevolence activated the reward, prediction and uncertainty areas; subsequent responses were characterised as intentional, collected, slower and lasting longer. However, malevolence activated the ‘fear of loss’ area. Responses from this area of the brain are automatic and immediate. However, both credibility and dis-credibility (associated with the trust antecedents of competence, honesty and integrity) activated the same prefrontal cortex cognitive area (Dimoka, 2010).

This brief literature review on distrust is pertinent to the current study’s aim of developing a model of trust. Given the uncertainty whether distrust and trust are on a continuum or separate constructs, any model arising from research specific to trust, such as the present study, should relate solely to increased and decreased trust (i.e. exclude distrust).

2.2.4 Trust process

Trust is based upon expectations. Therefore, the speed at which trust develops is considered to be contingent upon the perceived amount and quality of information available (Sapienza et al., 2007) and is related to learning (Nooteboom & Six, 2003). As Robbins et al. (2008) succinctly summarise it, ‘Trust is a history-dependent process based on relevant but limited samples of experience’ (p. 437).

In a new relationship, the initial or default level of trust is one’s generalised trust (Choi & Han, 2011, Kramer, 2009; Newton & Zmerli, 2011; Schoorman et al., 2007). This is defined as the ‘unspecific trust in general others, including strangers’ (Hardin, 2002, p. 61). Within the literature, generalised trust is alternatively referred to as ‘disposition to trust’ (Reimann et al., 2017) and ‘out-group trust’ (Delhey & Welzel, 2012).

Generalised trust contrasts with particularised trust, which is trusting a particular individual with whom one has an ongoing relationship (Choi & Han, 2011). The latter is the focus of the present study. However, studies indicate that generalised and personalised trust are mutually informing. While trust in an individual not yet personally known begins from one’s default level of generalised trust, research suggests that particularised trust also appears to be a necessary, although not sufficient, antecedent for higher generalised trust (Delhey & Welzel, 2012; Newton & Zmerli, 2011).

An individual's generalised trust also appears to be impacted by perceived vulnerability to societal structures. For example, levels of education and income are positively correlated with generalised trust, whereas significant health issues and feeling part of a group that was historically discriminated against are negatively correlated with generalised trust (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000; Viitanen, 2011). Vulnerabilities induced by organisational structures, such as worker's vulnerability from performance appraisal systems, are discussed later in Section 2.2.7.

Pettit (1995) has argued that trusting without first having evidence of trustworthiness is founded upon the trustor's belief that the other party wishes to be held in good regard (by the trustor and/or witnesses) and so will act in a trustworthy manner. Thus, for generalised trust and, as discussed previously, levels of particularised trust, there are two key issues: (1) perceived vulnerability/self-efficacy, informed by perceived agency and power imbalance (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000; Viitanen, 2011) and (2) whether an individual perceives the other party to be desirous of or indifferent to positive judgement by the trustor and/or witnesses (Pettit, 1995).

For example, in Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) trust process model, trust evolves from calculus-based trust to knowledge-based trust and, finally, identification-based trust. According to their theory, attaining a level of trust may, depending upon the developing relationship, lead to the trust evolving to the next level.

They describe the first level of trust on their model, calculus-based trust, as a deterrence-based trust. This concept was based upon Shapiro et al.'s (1992) writings that a 'primary motivation for keeping one's word is deterrence, which can be defined as the existence of measures to prevent hostile actions' (Shapiro et al., 1992, p. 366).

Another example comes from the economics literature, where Ring (1996) coined the terms 'fragile trust' and 'resilient trust'. Fragile trust is similar to the aforementioned deterrence trust and, in Ring's writings, is also the first stage in the development of trust. Ring described fragile trust as facilitating parties to interact, but in guarded ways: for example, by employing safeguards such as contracts, although without needing to 'over-specify' the terms and conditions of a contract (p 153). Ring equates fragile trust with McAllister's (1995) 'cognitive-based trust', which is trust based upon expectations of another's reliability and dependability.

However, Lewicki and Bunker's (1995) deterrence-based trust and Ring's (1996) fragile trust are problematic to the extent that they entail deliberate and overt control of one or both parties over the other. If tangible incentives to induce completion of a task, or penalties for failure, are sought prior to the task, the situation is not one of trust, according to the commonly accepted trust definitions which assert that trust is 'irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party' (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712). There is strong agreement that trust inherently involves giving greater *fate control* over outcomes for the trustor to the trustee (Gausdal et al., 2016; Thibaut & Kelley, 2009). 'Trust is the very opposite of control ... Trust entails lack of control' (Flores & Solomon, 1998, p. 206).

However, if one considers deterrence based trust and fragile trust as similar to, or transitioning from, the generalised trust one approaches all new relationships with, these forms of 'trust' could be considered types of 'proto-trust'. In this case, these suggest that cooperation based upon generalised trust (trust in non-specific others) can be the platform from which interpersonal trust (trust in a specified other) may develop.

The problematic nature of deterrence-based trust and fragile trust may have arisen from the literature's lack of a consistent definition of trust, particularly regarding whether trust is a mental state or a behaviour, as illustrated in Lewicki et al.'s (2006) statement that 'cooperative behavior is accepted as an observable manifestation of trust' (p. 993). Other scholars partially contradict this view, highlighting that, while the behaviour of cooperation can indicate the mental state of trust, cooperation may occur separately for other reasons (Möllering, 2006; Nooteboom, 2006).

For example, parties may work cooperatively due to controls put in place to punish transgressors (as per the definition of deterrence-based trust); from a contract between parties or, more generally, from the legal system; or due to a lack of alternatives (Cook et al., 2005; Van Lange et al., 2017). Mayer et al. (1995) concur, stating that '[a]lthough trust can frequently lead to cooperative behaviour, trust is not a necessary condition for cooperation to occur, because *cooperation does not necessarily put a party at risk*' (p. 712, emphasis in original).

McAllister (1995) supports the view that cooperation is not necessarily trust but from another angle, stating that providing assistance (cooperating) is not associated with

trust grounded in affect (benevolent intent). Similarly, Hardin (1999) notes that delegation (the other side of cooperation), which is required for the simple accomplishment of tasks, can occur without trusting. Therefore, cooperation may be a useful, but not sufficient, prerequisite for the development of interpersonal trust. As cooperation and trust are similar, yet not necessarily equivalent, Bacharach et al. (2001) describe cooperation as a ‘cousin’ of trust. This distinction between cooperation and trust is important as laboratory experiments manipulating cooperation, such as the Prisoner’s Dilemma Game, have often made assumption that cooperation equates to trust.

The ‘second level’ of trust in Lewicki and Bunker’s (1995) process model is knowledge-based trust, which is founded upon knowing another party sufficiently well to predict future behaviour. However, in a recent interview, Lewicki explained his views on knowledge-based trust had evolved; he now considers that ‘knowledge’ is;

how well I can predict you, how well I can anticipate your reactions to what I do. But that is not inherent in trust. It drives the trust I have, but it is not a component of trust. We have pretty much left knowledge-based trust by the wayside. (Gillespie, 2017, p. 7)

This suggests that there has been a confounding of *types of trust* with *trust antecedents*. This is discussed further in the ‘Methodology’ section pertaining to phenomenology (Section 3.3.1), regarding the potential for confusion if one discusses an inherent component of a whole issue or object as if it were a separable item.

The final level in the Lewicki and Bunker model of the trust process is identification-based trust. This is based upon a deeper level of understanding wherein the tacit desires and intentions of the other party are ‘developed to the point that each can effectively act for the other’ (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996, p. 122).

Under Ring’s (1996) theory for the process of trust, the level above his ‘fragile trust’ is resilient trust. This is the ‘moral integrity, or goodwill, of others on whom economic actors depend for the realization of collective and individual goals when they deal with future, unpredictable issues’ (Ring, 1996, p. 156). The ‘resilience’ characterising this trust illustrates Ring’s belief that perceived benevolence provides some buffer against the ‘occasional fall from grace of A in the eyes of economic actor B’ (p. 156). Ring

equates resilient trust with McAllister's (1995) 'affect-based trust', which is based upon reciprocated care and concern (benevolence). Similarly, McAllister (1995) theorises this trust has a buffer: 'ascribed motives [benevolence/malevolence] are taken as permanent and left unquestioned, even in the face of disconfirming evidence. Transgressions are discounted in advance or explained away' (p. 30).

In a study of trust between romantic couples, Rempel et al. (1985) found that perceptions of a partner's intrinsic motivation to be loving and caring towards oneself was the most important trust construct. Interestingly, this study also indicated the subtle yet important distinction that rather than consistency being needed in a trusting relationship, the *absence of unpredictability* was salient. Their process of trust, as supported by their study, found that

the most specific and concrete stage [of trust is] predictability. The predictability of a partner's behaviour is influenced by a host of factors including such basic elements as the consistency of recurrent behaviour and the stability of the social environment. (Rempel et al., 1985, p. 96)

However, in one of the few longitudinal studies of trust, Bell et al. (2002) conducted a case study of a ten-year trust relationship between a buyer and supplier. They found that over this period, events occurred that led the supplier to re-evaluate their initial assessment of the customer's benevolence. Following this, the supplier also became more sensitive to, and noticed issues with, the customer's competence and integrity. This research illustrated that a violation of benevolence precipitated the deterioration of trust.

Trust research has primarily taken a snapshot perspective of trust antecedents and consequences rather than longitudinal, research; it has been argued such research fails to capture the dynamic nature of trust (Gillespie, 2017). Certainly, the terminology of 'trust antecedent' and 'trust consequences' used by many scholars (e.g. De Jong et al., 2017; Kramer, 1999; Mayer et al., 1995; Möllering, 2017) suggests a linear relationship from antecedent, to trust, to consequence. It can be argued that this terminology obscures the dynamic nature of trust. However, 'trust is continually under negotiation, whether explicit and articulated or not' (Flores & Solomon, 1998, p. 223).

As discussed earlier, the theories of the process of trust development have not been firmly backed by data and indeed, findings from individualist and cultural collectivist

context suggest that the process by which trust develops may differ according to context (Chua et al., 2009; McAllister, 1995). Confounding the process of trust between two parties is that, although the belief in the trustworthiness of another party is founded upon personal experience of the untrustworthy/trustworthy actions of the party (Sitkin & Roth, 1993), it may also be founded upon the trustworthiness reputation (third party trust) (Hardin, 2002; Kramer, 2009; Möllering, 2006; Pettit, 1995) or similarities with oneself, such as gender, age, and family background, which ‘serve as proxy for personal experience’ (Sitkin & Roth, 1993, p. 368).

2.2.5 Mutual cyclical growth model of trust, signalling and reciprocity

The ‘mutual cyclical growth model’ of trust describes how trust begets trust. To illustrate, consider a dyad, Alex and Chris. If Alex is willing to be vulnerable and dependent upon Chris, Alex has a trusting psychological state. When a situation of potential vulnerability arises, if Alex behaves in accordance with her psychological state, Alex’s behaviour will signal her trust in Chris. Research indicates that Chris is likely to receive this as ‘felt trust’, which can motivate Chris to trust Alex in return (Salamon, 2003; Salamon & Robinson, 2008).

So, from Alex’s initial trust, Chris is likely to reciprocate by trusting Alex; this is a propagation of trust from the prime trust. If Chris then behaviourally signals her trust in Alex, the mutual trust cycle continues, and their trust in each other strengthens if they continue to build a mutual history of pro-social actions over different contexts.

Therefore, depending upon perceived intents and actions, trust may dynamically increase over time. This explanation of the trust cycle illustrates how trust is mutually constituted. As Whitener (2006) observed, ‘trust is not merely an attitude held by one party toward another but exists in the parties’ relationship’ (p. 141).

Li (2007) furthers the notion of trust existing in a relationship by proposing two types of trust; ‘trust-as-attitude’ and ‘trust-as-choice’. In his conception of trust-as-choice, the trustor relies upon the mutual cyclical growth of trust and has an aim of creating, or strengthening, a relationship with the trustee. To achieve this, the ‘trustor’ behaviourally demonstrates trust as a performative action to be observed, with the aim of leveraging reciprocity norms to ‘earn’ trust in return from the other party (Li, 2007,

2012). Trust-as-choice therefore becomes a form of governance (Li, 2015) which attempts to create social norms of acting in the other party's interests.

In comparison, trust-as-attitude is instinctive and non-committal. It is 'a pre-decisional ... psychological state of passively accepting a given risk, rather than the initiative to take risk' (Li, 2007, p. 435). As such, 'trust-as-attitude' aligns more closely to the idea of 'trust as a psychological state' which is used the mainstream definitions of trust. Such definitions refer to the trustor having a willingness or intent to be vulnerable (Mayer et al., 2015; Rousseau et al., 1998) without explicitly stating why or how this willingness/intent arose, instead leaving the process models of trust development to provide these explanations.

Although trust-as-attitude and trust-as-choice are not mutually exclusive (Li, 2015), the notable differences are summarised in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Comparing 'trust-as-attitude' and 'trust-as-choice'

	Trust-as-attitude	Trust-as-choice
The trustor is willing to be vulnerable to the other party's actions.	Yes. The trustor perceives her vulnerability to the <i>potential harm</i> is at an acceptable level.	Yes, however trust-as-choice focuses on the <i>potential benefit</i> associated with vulnerability. It is 'closely tied to the notion of self-sacrifice ... [involving] seemingly irrational high-trusting behavior, which tends to be reciprocated by high-trusting behavior' (Li, 2015, p. 41).
The trust process	The trust is <i>passively</i> generated.	The trust is <i>actively</i> generated.
Basis of the trust	The trust is instinctive, reflexive, and primarily concerned about <i>past information and knowledge</i> ; it 'does not require any future-oriented considerations' (Li, 2015, p. 40).	The trust is based on a cognitive analysis of potential <i>future scenarios</i> .

Based upon: Li 2012, 2015, 2016

Returning to the discussion regarding the mutual cycle of trust, the literature indicates that in the same way that the cycle tends to perpetuate *increased* trust between individuals, this process can also perpetuate *decreased* trust. Scholars further assert that once trust has degenerated to a certain level it is very difficult to reverse as even

genuine attempts of trustworthiness are met with suspicion (Boss, 1978; Zand, 1972). 'The behavior of the distrusted person is systematically interpreted in such a way that distrust is confirmed' (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 550).

The mutual cycle of trust has described how demonstrating trust builds reciprocal trust. However, trust signals can be misconstrued, particularly when the receiver is inferring the signaller's intention through the lens of power inequity (Weibel, 2007). For example, a leader may request her subordinate to undertake an assignment as she trusts she will complete the task well. However, due to the power differential, this request may be interpreted by the subordinate as a request backed by power rather than an exhibition of trust. Therefore, either explicit communication highlighting one's trust or other symbols of trust may need to be deployed by management to initiate the mutual trust cycle.

Dovey (2009) provides an example of trust signalling and reciprocity; Nelson Mandela pardoned all who confessed guilt and exhibited sincere remorse, regardless of what 'side' they were on. This was 'without precedence in human history and as a strategy for building trust between former enemies it has been remarkably successful' (p. 316). Hewlett-Packard provides another example closer to the average organisation. This company allowed engineers to take any equipment home with justification and minimal bureaucracy, demonstrating that management trusted staff, successfully starting a trust chain reaction (Kramer, 2009).

As can be seen from these examples, the norm of reciprocity underpins trust. Reciprocity has been conceived as a continuum (Sahlins, 2017). On one end is negative reciprocity, which assumes a 'win-lose' stance. Tactics such as guile, cunning or violence are employed. Examples of negative reciprocity are haggling, bartering, gambling and theft (Sahlins, 2017). Negative reciprocity may provoke moral judgement (Gouldner, 1960). Some taboos such as theft and incest are so strongly 'morally ingrained' within society that they have been codified in legislation. In this manner, structure limits vulnerability to certain negative reciprocity practices.

In the middle of the continuum is 'balanced' or 'specific' reciprocity. This reciprocity implies a mechanical, transactional or impersonal concern for the other party. It is characterised by a directness in the timing of return and equivalency in the value of

goods/acts exchanged, such as work colleagues exchanging Christmas gifts (Putnam, 1993).

At the other end of the continuum is generalised or diffuse reciprocity. It is personalised, compassionate reciprocity, characteristic of a continuing relationship. At any given time, there is an imbalance in the acts benefiting the parties, although there is a mutual expectation that a benefit provided now will be repaid in some indefinite future. However, any reciprocation is still free choice and helping is spontaneous and ‘imperfectly predictable’ (Nooteboom, 2002, p. 73). ‘The material side of the transaction is repressed by the social: reckoning of debts outstanding cannot be overt and is typically left out of account’ (Sahlins, 2017, p. 176).

It is the ‘diffuse reciprocity’ end of the continuum that is fundamental to trust. Gouldner (1960) states that this reciprocity is based on two interrelated principles. Upon being helped by a party, one should (1) help, and (2) not harm, that party. Thus, each party in this reciprocity relationship has rights *and* duties. In this manner, diffuse reciprocity reconciles self-interest with other-concern, creating solidarity between mutually trusting parties (Putnam, 1993; Taylor, 1995).

Each individual act in a system of reciprocity is usually characterized by a combination of what one might call short-term altruism and long-term self-interest: I help you out now in the (possibly vague, uncertain and uncalculating) expectation that you will help me out in the future. Reciprocity is made up of a series of acts each of which is short-run altruistic (benefiting others at a cost to the altruist) but which together typically make every participant better off. (Taylor, 1995, pp. 28–29)

To be most effective, a norm of diffuse reciprocity occurs in a dense social network. Networks facilitate communication about the trustworthiness of parties, and generate a potentially long-lived cost to trust betrayal (Putnam, 1993; Rathbun, 2011). Networks also embody past cooperation and trust, further facilitating trust through examples and templates (Putnam, 1993). ‘Individuals are able to be trusting (and not merely gullible) because of the social norms and networks within which their actions are embedded’ (Putnam, 1993, p. 177).

2.2.6 Third-party trust signalling (trust intermediaries)

Trustworthiness signals can be transmitted via third-party endorsements. Examples of third party competence signals are the professional certifications that license medical and legal practitioners and public customer ratings of e-commerce sellers. The power of third-party trustworthiness signals was demonstrated when eBay initiated the public ratings of sellers' trustworthiness; that year eBay's registered users jumped from 341,000 to 2.1 million (Kramer, 2009).

Pettit (1995) theorised that third party trust endorsement does not need to be overtly stated; merely observing enacted trust can result in increased perceived trustworthiness. Research supports this; public compliments within an organisation were found to help build trust in colleagues with whom a person did not yet have a relationship when the compliment was given by a trusted individual (Six, 2005).

Trust facilitated by a third party may also create an incentive to fulfil trust in circumstances where all parties are known to each other. Given that the trustee values the relationship with the initial trustor, the trustee will be mindful that untrustworthy behaviour towards a new trustor may impact the trustee's reputation, and thus relationship, with the original trustor (Hardin, 2002). Möllering (2006, p. 8) refers to this as 'chains of trust'. Collectivist cultures are characterised by mutual interdependence and embeddedness within networks, so perhaps it is unsurprising that third-party 'trust endorsement' is particularly salient to trust within a collectivist culture (Chua et al., 2009).

Table 2.2 Summary of academic literature on trust antecedents within an organisation and existing dyadic relationship (i.e. excludes generalised trust)¹

Higher level concept	Studies									
	Gabarro (1978)	Barber (1983)	Butler (1991)	Mayer et al. (1995)	McAllister ^{2,3} (1995)	Mishra (1996)	Nooteboom (2002)	Six (2003;2005)	Wasti et al. (2011)	
									Research in Turkey	Research in China
Trustor's perceptions of the consistency of effort the trustee will make in fulfilling the trustor's expectations	Integrity <i>Is honest</i>	Persistence and fulfilment <i>of 'the natural and the moral social orders' (p. 9)</i>	Integrity	Integrity	Cognition-based trust <i>Adhering to a set of principles acceptable to trustor</i>	Reliability <i>Reliability, dependency, consistency</i>	Informational trust , with honesty trust (truthfulness) an aspect of this	Ethics (2003)/ Norm-acceptability (2005) <i>'acceptability of the trustee's set of values and principles' (2003, p. 201)</i>	Integrity <i>Incl. reliability, fairness (being just, objective and protecting everyone's rights), reciprocating trust, can be relied on to complete assignments adequately and openness. Note: when a subordinate demonstrated Openness, it was exhibited primarily as honesty</i>	
	Consistent behaviour		Consistency							
	Openness and discreteness <i>Openness a trust antecedent for subordinate trust in leader, but not in the converse.</i>		Promise fulfilment			Openness			Common Values n/a <i>(specific to Turkey): Shared values, lifestyles & interests</i>	
			Fairness							
			Openness							
			Discreteness							
			Receptivity							
Trustor's perceptions specific to the task	Competent <i>in the task, interpersonal competence, and business sense</i>	Technically competent performance	Competence	Ability <i>'The skills, competencies & characteristics that enable a party to have influence within some specific domain' (p. 717)</i>	<i>Included in 'cognition based trust' (above)</i>	Competence	Competence trust <i>The ability, skills and knowledge in methods and use of technology and in communication</i>	Ability	Ability (Capacity) <i>Only salient to trust in subordinates</i>	Ability (Capacity) <i>Salient to supervisor, peer & subordinate trust</i>
	Good judgement <i>(links also to competence, openness, discreteness)</i>									
Trustor's perceptions regarding trustee intent towards the trustor	Motives and intentions	Fiduciary obligation & responsibility <i>'duties in certain situations to place others' interests before their own' (p. 9)</i>	Loyalty	Benevolence <i>'the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive.' (p.718)</i>	Affect-based trust <i>Reciprocated care and concern</i>	Concern <i>'self-interest is balanced by interest in the welfare of others' (p. 267)</i>	Benevolence	Benevolence	Benevolence <i>Understanding, support, a win-win approach, compassionate behaviour. Specific to trust in supervisor: treating subordinate with respect and not looking down on them due to status</i>	
	Loyalty		Availability				Dedication trust	Dedication <i>Judgement of the effort a trustor will make to meet expectations</i>	Benevolence <i>(definition specific to Turkey): Intimacy, unselfish, personalised generosity & protection</i>	Benevolence <i>(definition specific to China): Affability (kind-hearted and amicable)</i>

Notes to Table 2.2:

1. *Generalised trust (predisposition to trust) was not included in the table, given that it was excluded from the scope of the current study, which was focused upon existing trust relationships.*
2. *While McAllister's (1995) cognition-based trust and affect-based trust is a process model of trust, the descriptors directly pertain to trustee and relationship traits.*
3. *Where a trust antecedent from the literature was determined to be broader than other models, this is illustrated on the table by a cell that encompasses more than one row. This pertains to McAllister's (1995) 'cognition-based trust', which is diagrammatically depicted as overlapping two rows ('consistency of effort' and 'perceptions specific to the task') in the table.*

Information on trust studies included in the table:

Gabarro (1978)

Exploratory field study over 3 years of four organisations. Participants (all male) were four presidents (new to each organisation) and key subordinates (e.g. Vice presidents).

Barber (1983)

Theorising, drawing upon literature.

Butler (1991)

Interviews of managers to identify trust conditions/items, Role play with management students in a bargaining exercise manipulating trust with a participant observer completing report with open-ended questions 3. 'Conditions of Trust Inventory' survey with paired manager-subordinate dyads.

Mayer et al. (1995)

Theoretical model based upon review of trust literature.

McAllister (1995)

Surveys of MBA students from various industries & their peers studying trust by managers and professionals in their peers.

Mishra (1996)

Semi-structured interviews of 33 participants (CEOs, COOs or head of major operating unit), discussing trust in stakeholders (e.g. subordinates, customers).

Nooteboom (2002)

Theoretical model based upon review of trust literature.

Six (2003)

27 interviews and observations of meetings conducted within one organisation in Netherlands.

Six (2005)

Case study (two organisations) with embedded quantitative research (event analysis and survey) and embedded qualitative (observations, open-ended interviews, document analysis and verification meetings).

Wasti et al. (2011)

Two country study of trust in supervisor, peer & subordinate. Semi-structured interviews of 30 Turkish & 30 Chinese employees, with majority of participants being male, aged in mid-30s and 90% with at least a university degree.

2.2.7 How organisational structures impact on interpersonal trust within organisations

2.2.7.1 Introduction

Organisations can impact upon one's trust over a wide range of trust targets, such as one's interpersonal trust in a supervisor or colleague, trust in a group/team of people (e.g. management, workgroup) or in the organisation itself. These types of trust are 'conceptually and empirically distinct, and consequently ha[ve] at least partially different antecedents and consequences' (Verburg et al., 2017; p. 4).

However, the understanding of how organisational structures impact trust is not yet well developed and has been hampered by conflicting findings. Frédérique Six asserts that 'no comprehensive explanation of trust has been found that can explain how ... organizational policies and setting affect the generation and maintenance of trust' (Six, 2005, p. 8). Bachmann (2001) wonders whether the lack of research into how organisational structures impact trust has resulted from defining trust as a psychological state. He posits that this definition highlights the role of relationships while underplaying macro-level contextual factors, 'specifically the institutional arrangements which constitute the business environment in which relationships are nested' (Bachmann, 2001, p 205-206).

Organisational structures are the explicit and implicit 'rules' of the organisation, such as (Roy, 2008):

- the functional hierarchy, span of control, position limits and basis of the division structure (product, geography or customer);
- the reward system;
- status structure (e.g. titles, allocation of corporate vehicles);
- problem solving structure and level of decision-making;
- information channels and internal governance;
- how tasks and responsibilities are allocated;
- how tasks and employees are coordinated and monitored; and
- how decisions are made within the organisation (e.g. centralised or decentralised).

Scholars have different views regarding how organisational structures support or undermine interpersonal trust. One position is that trustors rely on institutional systems as a failsafe should betrayal of trust occur (Lumineau & Qu  lin, 2012; Shapiro, 1987). For example, if a trustee fails to meet a verbal agreement, the betrayed trustor may fall back upon the legal system to seek remedy, thus reducing the risk of trusting. Using this perspective, the ‘guardians of trust are themselves trustees’ (Shapiro, 1987, p. 623) – that is, the trustor is also trusting the institutional system.

However, systems designed to prevent untrustworthy behaviour can create new issues as these policing mechanisms cannot cover every eventuality and there are loopholes that may be more evident to the opportunist motivated by self-gain than the would-be trustor. Thus, institutional systems may provide a false sense of reduced risk, giving more opportunity to those who would act for self-benefit rather than for the trustor’s benefit (Shapiro, 1987).

Another drawback to strong institutional systems is that if a potential trustor believes the other party to be acting in a particular manner due to external controls rather than due to a personal pro-social stance towards the trustor, the system obscures trust signals and hinders the development of trust (Inkpen & Currall, 2004; Six & Sorge, 2008).

However, Giddens (1992) takes the position that organisational structures require individuals to execute structural ‘rules’. Thus, an enacted ‘rule’ not only has potential to increase trust in the system but, due to the freedom one has in enacting or ignoring the rule, carrying out the rule can increase trust in the individual. In Giddens’ terminology, an organisation’s system is a collection of ‘faceless commitments’, and trust in the system is re-embedded by interpersonal trust which transforms or sustains the trust through ‘facework commitments’ (p. 88).

Other trust scholars, such as Frederiksen (2016), base their views on the work by philosopher Knud L  gstrup (1956/1997), asserting that trust requires little justification and is spontaneously given unless events have occurred to activate suspicion and spur the trustor to be ‘on guard’. From this perspective, institutional systems have an asymmetrical impact, with only limited positive impact upon interpersonal trust. The more extensive negative impact upon interpersonal trust may result from perceived

danger, instability, unfamiliarity of the institutional system and/or an institutional system limiting opportunities for trust to occur, or obscure signals of trust occurring (Frederiksen, 2016; Six, 2005).

2.2.7.2 Employee trust in workplace colleagues holding higher formal power (leaders, mentors and human resource employees)

Vallentin and Thygesen (2016) have observed a lack of research focused upon the relationship between trust and control within a public sector context. However, there have been trust studies within a private sector organisational context, and these are discussed here. However, it is important to note that the organisational context can provide challenges to trust between organisational actors. Differences in levels of formal power, inherent in many relationships within an organisation, grant opportunity to exploit another organisational actor with less power. Organisational structures (rules) can also be leveraged as a means to such exploitation. Understanding the availability of opportunity and means, motive (perceived benevolent/indifferent /malevolent intent) may be particularly salient to trusting organisational actors who have greater formal power than oneself.

Some literature indicates that explicit specification of conduct between parties (in the form of contracts, organisational policies and procedures) depresses interpersonal trust (Malhotra & Murnighan, 2002), yet other research has found explicit documentation of roles and responsibilities for each party supported trust (Mayer & Argyes, 2004). A recent study by Lumineau (2017) suggests that these different trust outcomes are a result of whether the written guide for the parties is perceived as controlling or coordinating.

This view is supported by Six (2005), who also found that when monitoring or control was perceived by employees as controlling – that is, as having the purpose of achieving compliance by use of formal power – employees perceived this as lack of trust, or distrust. However, monitoring and control that was perceived to have the goal of coordinating staff removed ambiguity and promoted a shared understanding of responsibilities and expectations, which supported trust between colleagues. In this context, tasks and responsibilities were perceived as being delegated to employees, which was received as felt trust. This research suggests that the key factor for whether the control and monitoring were perceived as controlling or coordinating was whether

employees were empowered to influence ‘what rules were set and how they [were] enforced’ (Six, 2005, p. 70).

Podsakoff et al. (1996) found that when a leader provided individualised support it promoted employee trust in the leader. In combination, these results support the notion that an employee experiencing ‘felt trust’ from the leader supports reciprocated trust in the leader, in accordance with the mutual cycle of trust discussed earlier.

Particularly relevant to this study’s focus on the supervisor–subordinate relationship are the combined issues of (1) power asymmetries between roles, such that between supervisor and subordinate, and mentor and mentee, and (2) dual organisational roles that create a conflict of interest. The combination of these issues can create challenges in demonstrating benevolence for the individual in the higher power role. For example, supervisors and mentors have a dual role of supporting a subordinate/mentee, *and* working in the best interests of the organisation. Wilson and Patent (2011) found that although mentoring encouraged ‘befriending’, a relationship-building action, mentors prioritised their own professional integrity over benevolence towards their mentee. In circumstances where a mentee lacked competence, a mentor was likely to give a negative performance appraisal for a ‘failing’ or ‘borderline’ mentee. This was perceived by the mentee as a breach of trust, whereas the mentor perceived this action as necessary to maintain their professional integrity of doing what was ‘right’ for the organisation.

Similarly, Harrington and Rayner (2011) found that, in relation to bullying events, human resources practitioners (HRPs) in the United Kingdom had multiple stakeholders. However, in situations where there was a conflict between what the various stakeholders desired, the HRP research participants uniformly aligned themselves with management. HRPs acted primarily to protect the organisation. Bullied employees were of secondary concern. However, employees had an expectation that the HRP would be an advocate for employees. Harrington and Rayner found that such HRP actions negatively impacted not only the trust in the organisation, but trust in the HRPs and involved managers.

Within Australia, the context of this study, Young and Daniel’s (2003) research found unequal power resulted in employee distrust of those with greater hierarchical power

when power was exercised in a ‘capricious and insensitive’ (p. 144) manner. This study also found that employee trust was not supported when those with power were perceived as ignoring employee opinion and feedback.

In summary, subordinates alternatively perceive actions of monitoring or control as (1) controlling, which reduces subordinate trust in those of higher formal power; or (2) coordinating, which builds/maintains subordinate trust (Lumineau, 2017; Six, 2005; Young & Daniel, 2003). The difference appears to hinge upon whether those of lower formal power perceive they will be effective in shaping organisational structures (rules) and how these rules are enforced (Six, 2005; Young & Daniel, 2003).

However, even if monitoring and control are perceived as coordinating, which builds/supports a subordinate’s trust, studies have found this trust to be at risk in situations where there is a conflict of interest between the organisation and the subordinate. Research in Western organisations indicates that when supervisors and mentors perform their monitoring and control role in the organisation, they tend to prioritise their ‘professional’ obligation to the organisation over benevolent actions towards the subordinate. As this action contradicts the subordinate’s expectations of her supervisor/mentor who she previously believed to hold benevolent intent towards herself, the subordinate perceives this action as a betrayal of trust (Harrington & Rayner, 2011; Wilson & Patent, 2011).

2.2.7.3 Employee trust in workplace colleagues with a similar level of formal power

In relation to interpersonal trust between work colleagues of similar level of power, Verburg et al. (2017) proposed that control practices within an organisation indirectly support trust through facilitating task performance and coordination between teams. Achieving task outcomes supports positive competence assessments of one’s colleagues.

Organisational structures such as position descriptions and procedures which specify roles can also impact interpersonal trust within organisations. For instance, ‘role-based trust’, which is similar to the previously discussed ‘third party trust’ may exist if organisational roles have been constituted in alignment with trust antecedents. Thus, without an existing relationship, assumed trust-supporting expectations may exist.

‘With no prior knowledge of you, I may initially risk treating you as though I trust you, but our relationship can eventually be one of trust only if there are expectations that ground the trust’ (Hardin, 2002, p. 12).

For example, competence, a trust antecedent, may be prescribed in recruitment and promotion human resource processes. Thus, if competence is consistently used to screen employees for a role, employees can draw upon their (third-party) trust in organisational recruitment structures to credit a colleague they do not personally know with the required competence to achieve outcomes within their structural role.

Extrinsic motivation (external control) is understood to be negatively correlated with trust, whereas intrinsic motivation is positively correlated with trust (Rempel et al., 1985). So, acts perceived to be primarily dictated by organisational structures are unlikely to build interpersonal trust in colleagues, although they may buttress institutional trust in the organisation.

Third-party trust can also act in another way within organisations. When an employee is publicly praised for her work (e.g. at an organisational meeting or within distributed organisational documents, such as a company newsletter), it supports a positive assessment of her competence (Six, 2005). The obverse is also true; public criticism of work can create a negative competence assessment and hinder trust.

Organisational reward structures can be targeted towards individual performance, typically for outperforming others (competitive rewards) or based upon joint performance (cooperative rewards), or a mixture of these. Ferrin and Dirks (2003) used attribution theory to explore the effect of such rewards upon trust. Their study revealed that ‘rather than having a straightforward, direct effect on trust, rewards appear to affect trust by influencing individuals’ perceptions about each others’ motives’ (Ferrin & Dirks 2003, p. 29). Promoting group goals rather than individualistic goals and advocating group goals and encouraging collaboration and a team spirit not only supports trust between colleagues but also trust in the leader (Podsakoff et al., 1996).

2.2.7.4 Summary of organisational structures impacting interpersonal trust

In conclusion, the impact of organisational structures on interpersonal trust within organisations is complex. Scholars continue to debate how structures broadly impact interpersonal trust. Research at the granular level of particular structures, such as roles, reward and contracts and the impact these have upon trust are similarly contended.

However, having multiple stakeholders in a situation has potential to lead to conflicting interests, and then a breach of trust or broken expectations when acting in one stakeholder's best interest imposes a cost upon another stakeholder. Examples given were of mentors and human resource practitioners; however, any situation of multiple stakeholders may evoke conflicting goals within situations of vulnerability and thus have potential to negatively impact trust between colleagues.

2.3 Part 2. Review of Data-Directed Literature

2.3.1 Introduction

Literature going in to the study (Part 1 of this chapter) broadly reflected the extant trust research. The purpose was to equip the researcher with an overall understanding of trust in various settings without choosing a particular theory and possibly interpreting this study's findings through its theoretical lens. Part 2 (the current section) of this chapter was developed following the data analysis. The purpose was to review other literature grounded in participants' responses.

Both parts of the literature review are accessed for the discussion (Chapter 5). The literature in Part 1 is discussed in reference to whether trust theories are supported or challenged by the data of the present study. The following section, the review of the data-directed literature, reviews the academic theories not included in the extant trust literature.

2.3.2 Heuristics and Attribution theory

Economists refer to 'rational' decision-making as a process requiring thorough research identifying all relevant information, possible experimentation to manipulate variables and disentangle interdependencies (Hammond, 1980), understanding the

data, weighing up relative risks, costs and benefits inherent to all possible scenarios, and only then making a fully informed decision (Simon, 1955). However, this approach requires substantial time and effort, and thereby incurs an opportunity cost, wherein one's time and attention could be profitably spent elsewhere (Simon, 1955). Additionally, information may be limited and the option to conduct experimental trials may not be pragmatically feasible or ethically justifiable (Einhorn & Hogarth, 1978). In the context of these limitations, Bachmann (2011), a trust scholar, suggests the 'rational' option is to employ heuristics (mental shortcuts) to simplify situations and guide judgements in conditions of uncertainty, including decisions regarding trust.

Although heuristics, as a simplified judgement process, are incredibly useful, they can result in predictable patterns of error (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011; Kahneman & Tversky, 1973). However, there is often opportunity to perceive the results of one's judgement. Therefore, bias errors may be somewhat attenuated by a feedback loop (Hogarth, 1981). The oft-cited Mayer et al. (1995) 'ability, benevolence, integrity' (ABI) trust model includes such a feedback loop wherein the outcomes of trusting inform future trust assessments.

The findings of the current study also highlight the importance of feedback upon future trust assessments. However, the data also indicated a dissimilarity to the trust literature's feedback loop, and were more in alignment with Weiner's attribution theory wherein individuals search for a cause/s following an unexpected event or inconsistent behaviour (Weiner, 1986), as will be explained in more detail in the 'Findings' chapter. Briefly, though, when the trustor believes there to be stable benevolence and competence, information on the trustee's benevolence and competence in the relevant task domain are no longer proactively sought as feedback. At that stage, the trustor is satisfied in her trust assessment and, excluding an unexpected circumstance which initiates a trust re-evaluation, the trust can be considered stable.

Thus, this study bridges the gap between the ABI trust model and other trust literature that proposes that trust can be routine, 'without questioning its underlying assumptions' (Möllering, 2006, p. 52). Prior to the current study, why trust became 'routine' (stable) was not understood (Möllering, 2006) other than 'we may trust

someone simply because our relation has worked out satisfactorily in the past' (Nooteboom, 2002, p. 43).

Attribution theory is a coherent sub-group of judgement heuristics (Hogarth, 1981; Kahneman et al., 1999) which explains and predict the manner in which individuals ascribe causes to failures and successes (Heider, 1958). As Kahneman and Miller (2003) remind us, '[r]easoning flows not only forward, from anticipation and hypothesis to confirmation and revision, but also backward' (p. 348).

Attributions are relevant in achievement settings (Weiner, 2008). The attributional inferences drawn from an outcome may be in relation to oneself or other parties. Weiner (1986) highlights that causal ascriptions are drawn against outcomes, rather than actions. Given that the definitions of trust commonly refer to a state of mind of willing vulnerability given positive expectations of another party (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998; Six, 2007), *trust antecedents in an existing relationship often equate to trustworthiness traits* such as ability, benevolence and integrity (Colquitt et al., 2007).

Attributions can be made from personal observation or indirectly gathered information, such as reputation, certification or even seller ratings by third parties, which inform 'third-party trust'. In the present study, attributions were evident in relation to an individual's perceptions of a supervisor's or subordinate's intent towards the trustor, as illustrated in the following quotation in which a subordinate attributed malevolent intent to her supervisor's behavior:

[T]he conversation was four weeks ago and you're expected to remember it but [my supervisor] brings out her notes. It's like, hang on a minute, it was just a conversation. But, no, she's got notes. (Participant #15, RO1a)

Causal attributions relating to competence were also evident in the data as participants assigned reasons for task success or failure. The most common attribution related to task failure was whether it was due to a cause that was internal (such as effort) or external (such as lack of training) to a subordinate, as illustrated in the following.

Internal cause: *[S]he's dead set on [doing this task] for some reason, but when she finally got on it, she was lazy as. (Participant #21, RO2a)*

External cause: *I trust [my subordinate] to work to the best of her ability ... I also understand that from a technical perspective she's not been trained. (Participant #34, RO2a)*

Kelley and Michela (1980) explain that attribution theory evolved as an intersection between lines of research became apparent and a convergence developed between naïve psychology (Heider, 1958), person perception (Jones, 1961), theory of emotion (Schachter, 1964), locus of control (Rotter, 1966), self-perception (Bem, 1967) and self-presentation (Jones & Worthman, 1973).

There is a nearly boundless list of what attribution theorists refer to as *causal explanations*. These are the detailed situational factors, such as effort, task complexity, luck, and traffic, to which individuals may ascribe to success or failure in achieving an outcome. However, for research and predictive purposes, attribution theorists usually refer to *causal dimensions*, which are a higher level of abstraction, such as the internal/external continuum or stable/temporary continuum (Kent & Martinko, 1995).

The trust philosopher Luhmann (1979/2017), argued that the function of trust is to reduce complexity by strengthening constancies (p. 17). Similarly, ascribing causes to events informs the predictions drawn by individuals, and not only directs future behaviour (Clifford, 2009; Weiner et al., 1971) but furnishes the construction of perceived order upon uncertainty (Graham, 1991).

We assess when we attribute action outcome mainly to the person, mainly to the environment, or a combination of both. Only then do we understand. Only then are we able to predict future action. (Heider, 1958, p. 99)

Predicting the future actions of another party is pertinent to trust, for trust is a confident expectation that the other party will perform a future action beneficial to the trustor, despite the potential cost to the trustee (Gambetta, 2000; Six, 2007). Attribution theory explains the trustor's prediction of the trustee's future success or failure, by following the trustor's causal explanation of the trustee's past success or failure. Drawing on Piaget's (1950) work, Heider (1958) noted that when something happens *to* a person, it is considered outside of the individual's control. As a result, other actors pity, rather than blame, the person. Pity is likely to generate pro-social, supportive behaviours. However, when an individual is considered to have been personally fully responsible

for a negative event, it is likely to result in the mental state of blaming and perhaps anger towards that individual. These emotions are likely to generate anti-social behaviours towards that person, such as moral judgements, neglect and sanctions (Weiner, 1986; Weiner et al., 1971). Thus, attribution theory provides a theoretical explanation from an event through to level of trust, as illustrated in the simplified event chain in Figure 2.1.

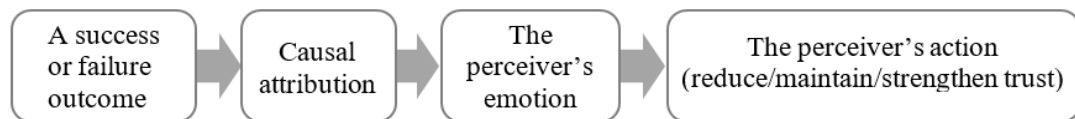


Figure 2.1 Event chain following a success or failure (adapted from Weiner, 1986, p. 197)

This is illustrated in the below quotation from the present study, wherein a colleague was personally blamed (causal dimension: internal) rather than attributing pressure from management or organisational policies (causal dimension: external) being identified as the cause of the ‘dobbing’ behaviour, resulting in a moral judgement of the colleague.

[W]e know how some information is fed to our manager, so we don't speak to that person at all ... It is an environment for relatively big boys, and don't be a sook about it ... they are deemed a dobber, and you just don't do that. You don't do it. (Participant #28, RO3)

Heider (1958) labels the attributions cast as external causes as ‘environmental difficulties’. Examples are lack of information, lack of resources or task difficulty. Internal attribution is antithetical to external attribution; however, both may be perceived to act simultaneously or singly. Heider (1958) highlights the verb ‘can’ as being interwoven with internal attribution; that is, ‘can’ the individual complete the task.

The internal/external attributional dimension has been well established in the literature (Kent & Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1979). Although some scholars have referred to the internal/external dimension as ‘locus of control’, in the attributional sense it is retrospective, so is more appropriately labelled ‘locus of causality’ within the attributional framework (Kent & Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1979).

The other key attributional dimension pertinent to the present study and widely accepted by scholars is the stable or temporary nature of an issue (Weiner et al., 1971; Weiner, 1986). For example, if fatigue or mood is attributed to an unusual task failure, the perceiver labels it as a temporary cause of failure is unlikely to believe the other party cannot do the task in ‘normal’ circumstances. Tomlinson (2018) asserts that the ‘stability’ causal dimension differentiates Weiner’s (1971) attribution theory from other variations of attribution theory, although all were founded upon Heider’s (1958) external/internal causal dimension.

In Chapter 5, attribution theory’s application to the data is discussed in greater detail, and greatly informs the tentative trust model that has emerged from the data. The finding of applicability of Weiner’s attribution theory to trust development has not previously been found in trust research (Tomlinson, 2018).

2.3.3 The blue-collar subordinate work context

Relevant across all fields of academic study, there is sparse literature researching blue-collar workers (Cowan & Bochantin, 2011) and specifically blue-collar workers in a local government context. However, blue-collar workers are a significant portion of the workforce, particularly within local government.

As at June 2017, there were 189,500 local government employees in Australia (ABS, 2017) and 2.1 million in the United Kingdom (ONS, 2017). A characteristic of local government in both Australia and UK (as Commonwealth countries) is the blend of blue-collar and white-collar workers. Although industry figures are not available, in the local government organisation in which this research was conducted, blue-collar workers accounted for 32 per cent to 37 per cent of the workforce. Although blue- and white-collar roles are located on a continuum rather than neatly stratified (Bottero, 2005), the following presents how this figure was calculated.

Figures were based on the organisational chart dated July 2014. The 37 per cent figure for blue-collar workers included all established positions that did not have their own landline telephone extension number as this indicated the nature of work to be primarily field-based. However, although library clerks and recreation centre attendants met some of the blue-collar work criteria (see operational definitions, Section 1.1), these workers could be considered to operate in a work environment

which is closer to an office-based environment in relation to cognitive work, and specifically the level of interaction with customers. Removing library clerks and recreation centre attendants from the total provided a blue-collar workforce figure of 32 per cent.

Within the trust literature, Kramer (1996) asserts that hierarchical disparity in the organisational roles occupied by individuals are ‘correlated with systematic and predictable asymmetries in how individuals construe trust in their relationships’ (p. 218). He argues that those of higher hierarchical status face greater challenges in eliciting trust from those of lower hierarchical status within the organisation due to subordinates’ vulnerabilities. The trust literature indicates the vulnerabilities which provide avenues for a supervisor to demonstrate benevolence/malevolence are: pay rises, promotions, granting coveted assignments, provision of support staff and the uncertain status those of a lower hierarchical position may feel they hold within the organisation (Kramer, 1996; Six, 2005).

Human resources research indicates two areas of disparity between white- and blue-collar workers pertinent to the aforementioned subordinate trust challenges noted by Kramer (1996) and Six (2005). Firstly, as a result of structural factors, blue-collar workers experience less opportunity (Thomas, 1996), and report less motivation (Huang, 2011) from workplace autonomy, work-related learning and belief that the output of their work is of great significance. A related second factor is a diminished relevance and opportunity to attain externally visible career success based upon individual achievement, such as: trajectory up an organisational hierarchy, higher wages and occupational prestige through challenging work assignments (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1996). The implication is that these extrinsic white-collar work career markers may render these mechanisms to earn trust largely irrelevant within a blue-collar context.

Note too, that the white-collar career success markers relate to a subordinate’s success as an individual. However, for blue-collar workers, a focus on individual achievement may be detrimental to oneself and one’s work group colleagues. For example, organisational reward structures may provide financial incentives that accrue according to the quantity of one’s output. The greedy pursuit of such incentives has been identified in several accident reports as generating conflicting motivations to act

in ways which protect the physical safety of oneself and others in the vicinity (Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004). Another example where taking an individualist approach has potential to harm the group pertains to blue-collar workers who seek to avoid work to minimise effort (cost) to themselves. Those who shirk work are reportedly despised by other blue-collar workers in their team due to the unequal sharing of work across the group (Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Torlina, 2011).

As discussed earlier, one of the career success markers applicable to white-collar workers is seniority of hierarchical position. When a supervisor assists a subordinate's efforts to be promoted, it is a meaningful demonstration of supervisor support which can help earn the trust of the subordinate (Kramer, 1996). However, this pathway to earn subordinate trust is less relevant for blue-collar workers as they have limited opportunity to 'climb the career ladder' (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1996). Therefore, instead of seniority of position, for blue-collar workers seniority in length of time is symbolically important as it represents prowess in the work, which in some fields has been formalised into markers of apprentice, journeyman and master craftsman (Thomas, 1996).

Thus, in the face of constrained opportunities for promotion and pay increases and diversity within the work, career development strategies that scholars promote as supporting subordinate trust in a supervisor (Kramer, 1996; Six, 2005; Wang et al., 2013) may be irrelevant to trust in a supervisor within a blue-collar context. As an aggregate result of all these differences, in contrast to white-collar workers, the markers of success for blue-collar workers tend to be *intrinsic* to the worker rather than *extrinsic* (Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004), focus upon the *means* of the work rather than the *final output*, and be orientated towards the *collective* rather than the *individual* (Thomas, 1996). Thus, the blue-collar worker context has the potential for different trust antecedents for subordinate trust in a supervisor. This issue has received scant attention in the trust literature.

The present study examined such trust dynamics within the underexplored context of blue-collar work. The findings suggested that at the concept level (i.e. benevolence and competence), trust antecedents were consistent across blue-collar and white-collar subordinate trust in a direct supervisor, though varied at the detailed level. However, it is this detailed level that operationalises concepts and provides practical guidance to

industry. For example, the findings of this study indicated mechanisms that the trust literature recommends as profitable to building trust (supporting pay increases, career development etc.) were less relevant to blue-collar subordinates. As this research is a small, exploratory study it is recommended that future research be conducted in this area in relation to blue-collar workers in other industries to ascertain the generalisability of this study's findings.

More broadly, but still related to trust research, a significant area the current study identified as ripe for future exploration is a comparison of organisational structure – particularly the information channels and innovation mechanisms (Roy, 2008) – as perceived by white- and blue-collar workers within an organisation. The current study suggests that organisational structures may be operationalised differently for the white- and blue-collar workers, which can impact relationships, and thus interpersonal trust between subordinates and supervisors and/or individuals in higher management roles.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the philosophical stance and theoretical perspectives in this thesis, discussing ontology, epistemology and methodology. Following this, theoretical and practical elements of research design are described and discussed. This chapter also articulates why particular research design elements were selected for this study and the strength of the framework's connection to the research question.

The research design, or 'interpretative framework' (Guba, 1990, p. 17) connects and aligns the ontology, epistemology and methodology of a study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Guba, 1990; Whiteley, 2004). A research design is chosen by a researcher with regard to the research question and the researcher's worldview, experiences and research expertise (Creswell, 2014; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Janesick, 2000). The framework is important to support research rigour and ensure transparency of the process for the reader, as inherent assumptions need to be understood and addressed (Lincoln et al., 2011).

In the present study, the research question has three components;

1. What are the *perceived* factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?
2. What are the *received* factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?
3. What aspects of organisational structure are perceived to affect trust between a subordinate and a supervisor?

Although the third component, in particular, is broad, it is considered profitable to the subject matter of this study, given that trust is understood to be contextually sensitive (Brandebo et al., 2013; Castle et al., 2012; Ferrin et al., 2008; Kramer, 1999; Rousseau et al., 1998). Additionally, a broad research scope aligns with advice from methodology literature.

[A] narrow research question can compromise gaining intimate familiarity with a research problem or setting. When we start with a narrow research question, we risk losing contextual richness because relevant contexts may lie beyond the frame of inquiry. (Charmaz, 2007, p. 79)

3.2 Philosophy ('Becoming')

The present study addresses the concept 'trust' on the basis that trust is not a stable construct, and is inconsistent over location and time. The philosophical stance of this study is therefore one of 'becoming', wherein trust is considered emergent and dynamic in response to the interactions of organisational actors and their internal cognitions (Tedlock, 2011).

3.3 Theoretical Perspectives (Symbolic Interactionism and Phenomenology)

The theoretical perspective is a central feature of a research methodology. In alignment with the philosophical position of 'becoming', this study follows the Chicago School, which pioneered field research such as the present study. The Chicago School of academics eschewed reductionism, arguing that social facts are inextricably situated within time and place; thus context is vital to research for deriving rich meaning (Abbott, 1997; Mead, 1900; 1922).

Two theoretical perspectives were selected for this study, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Each perspective is discussed separately, followed by consideration of the interaction between these perspectives.

3.3.1 Phenomenology

The first theoretical perspective selected for this study was phenomenology. Phenomenological research elicits participants' lived experiences of phenomena to distil their experiences while ensuring their accounts are represented faithfully (Creswell, 2014; Whiteley, 2012; Yin, 2011). As Nagel (1974) vividly illustrated, the aim of the phenomenological approach is not to discover what it is like to be a bat, but rather to discover 'what is it like *for a bat* to be a bat' (p. 439).

Although the term 'phenomenology' was used in eighteenth century philosophy texts (Moran, 2002), the philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) is regarded as the founder of phenomenology (Käufer & Chemero, 2015; Sokolowski, 2007). Literally, phenomenology is the study and knowledge of 'phenomena' (Smith, 2016). Phenomenology 'involves the use of thick description and close analysis of lived

experience to understand how meaning is created through embodied perception' (Starks & Trinidad, 2016, p. 1373). The aim of phenomenological research is to explore and expose individuals' subjective, embodied experiences to extract the commonality of an experience (Jopling, 1996; Smith, 2016; Starks & Trinidad, 2016). Thus, data are sought from those who have had first-person experience of the phenomena of interest and interviews are utilised for data collection (Aspers, 2009; Goulding, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2016).

The philosopher René Descartes founded the notion of dualism, the separation of the material body and the non-corporeal human mind (Jopling, 1996). A dualistic perspective juxtaposes the human body, which has volume and mass, receives external stimulus and exists temporally (in the current moment) against the internal mental world (the mind). The mind in this sense is not tangible, has internal stimulus and may conjure projections forward and backwards through time. Thus, dualism portrays the body and mind as separate and opposite. A phenomenological perspective, however, counters this dualistic notion. It embraces the body and mind as an interacting whole and, in addition, includes the inter-subjectivity arising from interactions between people (Merleau-Ponty, 2002; Zahavi, 2012). Phenomenology considers that the mind is 'a public thing, [which] acts and manifests itself out in the open' (Sokolowski, 2007, p. 12). Merleau-Ponty (2002) depicts the lived experience as the interplay of one's body, mind and inter-subjectivity 'engag[ing] each other like gears' (p. xxii). These descriptions encapsulate phenomenology's key notion of the human experience of 'being-toward-the-world' (Lewis & Staehler, 2010, p. 164) wherein human experience is neither purely physical nor purely psychological and enmeshes the internal subjective and external world of social beings and objects.

Phenomenology encompasses three interwoven themes: (1) the organisation of wholes and parts, (2) identity in manifolds ('one in many'), and (3) presence and absence (Sokolowski, 2007). In relation to the first theme, 'wholes' comprised independent and non-independent parts. Once detached from the 'whole', an independent part can exist as its own object. Examples are a branch, nut or leaf when detached from a tree. Wholes and independent parts can be presented and experienced as concrete, individual things ('concretum').

Non-independent parts ('moments') are inextricably linked to, and cannot be detached from, the 'whole' (Sokolowski, 2007). An example is the way 'sparkle' is bound to the whole experience of 'star'. Non-independent parts cannot be presented and experienced as a concrete individual thing. However, non-independent parts can be considered by themselves in abstract thinking. Phenomenological terminology refers to thinking about a non-independent part separately as 'abstracta' (Sokolowski, 2007). Because it is possible to ruminate on abstracta, it is possible to fall into the trap of considering abstracta as concretum, which according to phenomenology, unnecessarily complicates the issue being studied (Sokolowski, 2007). Thus, phenomenology is wary of taking a reductionistic view and directs the researcher to take care and consider whether something is 'concretum' or 'abstracta' (Gallagher, 2012; Sokolowski, 2007). For example, as discussed in the literature review, there are many trustworthiness traits purported to be antecedent to trust. However, the phenomenological theoretical perspective requires rumination on whether, for example, 'informational trust' (Nooteboom, 2002) can be detached from 'trust'; and whether informational trust is abstract thinking or whether it can exist and be presented and experienced separately to the whole of 'trust'.

Another potential issue for the phenomenological researcher is that habitualised activities do not necessarily require conscious awareness unless there are unusual circumstances. For example, the action of going up stairs may not need attentional focus and thus may be considered habituated. However, in the unusual event of a recent leg injury, attentional focus may need to be activated for this otherwise habituated activity.

Habitualisation is considered to be 'pre-reflective' and dilutes an individual's experience of 'being-toward-the-world' (Lewis & Staehler, 2010; Merleau-Ponty, 2002). The research implication is that participants are unlikely to provide rich data relating to habitualised activities. To mitigate this, this study utilises the critical incident technique, wherein research participants reflect upon an experience they self-identify as unusual, significant and related to the research topic of trust. This technique is discussed in more detail in Section 3.7.3.

As the phenomenological research approach requires first-hand experiences of the phenomena of interest, the researcher must consciously refrain from tainting the data

with a priori theories or categories. This requires the researcher, as much as she is able, to 'bracket' her beliefs, emotions and theories (Tufford & Newman, 2011; Yin, 2011). The phenomenological approach is then to gain a tentative 'foothold' of understanding of participant experiences. This foothold is to be questioned, with the resulting understanding progressing to the next foothold, which is similarly questioned. Phenomenological research therefore proceeds in what has been termed 'a zigzag manner' (Aspers, 2009).

3.3.2 Symbolic interactionism

Whereas phenomenological research aims to elicit experiences, the goal of symbolic interactionist research is to elicit the *meaning* participants attach to experiences (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006). George Mead, considered to be one of the forefathers of symbolic interactionism (Denzin, 1992), asserted that an individual and her context are intertwined, which he understood to have implications for how researcher studies human consciousness and individuals' understanding of their lived experience.

[C]onsciousness could no longer be regarded as an island ... [it] would be approached as experience which is socially as well as physically determined. (Mead, 1910, pp. 178–179)

The symbolic interactionist approach considers knowledge to be 'socially situated, bound into ever-emerging social worlds' (Plummer, 2012, p. 28). Thus, symbolic interactionist studies, such as the present research, are designed to elicit and explore the various beliefs and meanings participants hold over different contexts, while transparently discussing the context.

Mead's student, Herbert Blumer, progressed the symbolic interactionist approach into a theoretical perspective (Hewitt, 2010; Tan & Hall, 2007). Blumer (1969) explained that people respond to their understanding, or personal lens, of their subjective 'reality'. He coined the term 'symbolic interactionism' (Blumer, 1969) to denote this concept.

The symbolic interactionist approach rests upon the premise that human action takes place always in a situation that confronts the actor and that the actor acts on the basis of defining this situation that confronts him. (Blumer, 1997, p. 4)

Symbolic interactionism is based on three assumptions (Blumer, 1969):

1. Behaviour emanates from the meaning an individual has ascribed to physical objects, symbols, institutions, other people or their actions.
2. Meaning arises from social interactions i.e. the actor interacting with others.
3. Meanings are fluid and may be continuously adjusted as an individual further interprets the meaning.

Symbols may be anything that encodes a meaning, but they can be broadly grouped according to the following categories (Hewitt, 2010; Woods, 1992).

1. An object or image, e.g. types of work clothing, an organisational hierarchy chart, a closed door on an occupied office.
2. A gesture e.g. raising one's eyebrows, or receiving a pat on the back.
3. Linguistic symbols; words, phrases or labels, e.g. denoting an organisational role such as 'manager'.

Symbols themselves do not hold inherent meaning; rather, the meaning evoked by a symbol is to promote a particular response, and so relate to purpose and consequences (Miller, 2011). Symbols play a coordinating role in social life, as they evoke a generally shared approximate response in a group of people (Hewitt, 2010). Verbal symbols and labels in particular, facilitate perceiving others and oneself as objects (Woods, 1992) and, in the manner of all symbols, thus inform, shape and limit behaviour (Blumer, 1969). However, the meanings of symbols are not static. Even linguistic symbols, although captured and defined in dictionaries, evolve new words (DVD, selfie, incentivise), new meaning (e.g. 'girl', which was historically used in reference to age only rather than a specific sex) (Burridge & Bergs, 2016) or may fade from the lexicon.

The fluidity of words and their meaning illustrates the symbolic interactionist view that people are not passive absorbers of existing meanings and associated behaviour. Instead, individuals interact and respond to situations and, in so doing, co-create culture through their response by reaffirming, resisting or modifying meaning (Blumer, 1969; Woods, 1992). Culture and meaning are thus fluid and specific to time and place.

Berger (1963) described social reality as consisting of multiple layers of meaning, and explained that revealing subsequent layers alters perception of the whole. A symbolic

interactionist approach therefore requires the researcher to continue investigation and probing to delve past a participant's surface, or 'public face' layer (Woods, 1992). Revealing deeper layers of meaning allows a study to more accurately reflect the meaning of the whole lived experience, as perceived by the research participant.

A key concept within symbolic interactionism is the concept of 'self'. This arises from the internal interaction between what Mead termed the 'I' and the 'me' (Mead, 1934). 'I' is the current self in the moment, reacting impulsively to external stimulus, whereas the 'me' is the self as an individual reflects upon her past or imagines her future. The 'me' is considered to be a coherent set of socially determined expectations, such as those inherent to one's family role (e.g. 'mother'), nationality, societal role or work role (e.g. 'team leader' or 'blue-collar worker').

Mead describes how the 'me' dynamically adjusts, through imagination of future social situations and upon reflection of past events. Thus, meaning can also be metamorphosed as an 'actor interact[s] with himself' (Blumer, 1969, p. 5). Research interviews provide opportunity for such cognitive reflection, and thus a researcher may observe a research participant arriving at new meaning and conclusions during an interview, as instigated through explaining an event, symbol or ascribed meaning.

Participants may move back and forth in time and between events and sometimes even contradict themselves. These contradictions do not necessarily negate the story. Rather, they are indications that by telling their stories, participants are trying to make sense out of significant events in their lives, a clarity that might have eluded them until they sat down to talk. (Corbin & Morse, 2003; pp. 342–343)

This 'meaning-making in action' was evident during two interviews in the present study, one of which is presented below. The participants' facial expression in that moment of new meaning making was one of curiosity and surprise. Their speech slowed at this point as the participants were concurrently and actively engaged in meaning making. The earlier response from the participants appeared to be their 'public face' or socially acceptable response. Subsequent interview questions revealed some inconsistency between espoused belief and lived experience and provided the researcher a more nuanced understanding of the 'whole'.

I try to make it really clear when I'm talking to people [in my team]. I try to communicate really clearly so there isn't miscommunication or false hope in certain situations ... [but] There have been, yeah, it's funny you should say it now, and when you think about it you go, 'Yeah', just sitting [laughs] and here I am saying this and now I'm about to say something contradictory, but there have been situations where [I haven't communicated to my team] ... I just said, '[The director] is working on it', although that's obviously misleading, because I'm in effect lying to them. (Participant #23)

While symbolic interactionism investigates the meanings individuals hold, some have criticised this research perspective, claiming it is unsuitable for developing theories related to a larger system (de Nooy, 2009; Woods, 1992). Denzin (1992) explains the critique, stating that while symbolic interactionism explicitly recognises the interpretative, subjective nature of participant's knowledge, there is a problematic tension as symbolic interactionism also seeks 'to build an objective science of human conduct, a science which would conform to criteria borrowed from the natural sciences' (p. 2).

The literature has evolved to address this issue in different ways. For example, the Iowa school of symbolic interactionism, driven by Manford Kuhn (1964), leaned towards a positivistic approach perceiving the 'self' to operate in a relatively stable pattern due to stable social roles. The Iowa school focuses on Mead's 'me' portion of the self (Carrothers & Benson, 2003). Data collection methods following the school of Iowa symbolic interactionist approach typically include statistical analysis, questionnaires, surveys and secondary analysis of survey data (Benzies & Allen, 2001; Miller, 2011).

The Chicago School of symbolic interactionism, however, followed Blumer's (1969) approach of gaining an intimate understanding of the participants' lived experiences and retained focus on the 'I' and the interplay between 'I' and 'me' (Carrothers & Benson, 2003). The theoretical perspective taken by the present study is that of the Chicago school of symbolic interactionism. Charmaz (2008) asserts that the Chicago school counters the aforementioned criticism of symbolic interactionism, claiming it derives new theoretical understanding from the data, rather than imposing extant theories on the data. In addition, when paired with a grounded theory method (Glaser & Strauss, 2006), as in the present study, Denzin's (1992) concern is also addressed

by the research design, as grounded theory blends the ‘depth and richness of qualitative interpretive traditions with the logic, rigour and systematic analysis inherent in quantitative survey research’ (Walker & Myrick, 2006, p. 548).

The analytical process will be discussed in more detail later in the ‘Research Design’ Section 3.7. However, as a final point, Mason (2002) even more strongly refutes the critique of symbolic interactionism, stating that well-founded cross-contextual generalities are actually more easily facilitated by studies that link context with study findings in comparison to potentially ‘flimsy de-contextual versions’ (p. 1) of research findings.

3.3.3 Combining symbolic interactionism and phenomenology

Phenomenology requires the researcher to elicit participants’ lived experiences relevant to the research question and describe the common pattern of the experience between participants (Creswell et al., 2007). Symbolic interactionism elicits the meaning and sense held by participants and emanating from interactions with others, with social structures and with other meaning-making symbols (Starks & Trinidad, 2016). In short, phenomenology elicits experiences, while symbolic interactionism elicits the meaning participants ascribe to their lived experiences (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006).

However, there is much similarity between the position and processes of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. Both theoretical perspectives require reflexivity on the part of the researcher; recognition of one’s own position and biases and consciously setting these aside to ensure accurate reflection of participants’ voice and meaning. Both hold participants’ voices to be paramount, and both require the researcher to seek rich and thick descriptions for data, and form understanding from the data rather than a priori theory. Thus, from both perspectives, the researcher brackets her own views and extant theories and engages in inductive rather than deductive analysis (Starks & Trinidad, 2016; Yin, 2016). Both theoretical perspectives stipulate theoretical sampling (Starks & Trinidad, 2016); the targeting of data-rich participants with first-hand experience of the phenomena being researched, which for this study, are those with experience of interpersonal trust within a local government organisation.

Researcher attention is directed similarly for both theoretical perspectives. Charmaz (2008) asserts that symbolic interactionism requires the researcher to be sensitive not just to what is said or done, but to what is left unsaid and to actions not taken, which also generate data profitable for theory development. This reflects the phenomenological attention to ‘presence and absence’ (Sokolowski, 2007).

In summary, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism are complementary theoretical perspectives. They require the same research approach: an understanding that experience and knowledge are subjective, the privileging of the voices of participants and the researcher’s bracketing of her prior beliefs, biases and knowledge of extant theory. However, while phenomenological research has the primary aim of eliciting experiences, the primary aim of symbolic interactionism is to elicit the meanings bound within these experiences. Thus, these perspectives sit comfortably with each other, and are considered profitable to use in combination to further understanding regarding the behaviours, symbols and meanings that impact trust.

3.4 Ontology (Constructivist)

Ontology is concerned with ‘the nature of reality’ (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 91). In the case of social research such as this, the ontological question posed is, what is the nature of social reality? Is social reality subjective, negotiated and fluid (‘becoming’) or is it objective, uniform and external to the participants (‘being’) (Boeije, 2012; Erickson, 2011; Guba, 1990).

For this research, two contrasting ontological perspectives were considered: positivism/post-positivism and constructivism. Positivism and its derivative, post-positivism, are founded upon a belief that a ‘real’, objective and universal reality exists, albeit with a level of probability. An inherent assumption of these perspectives is that there is an objective realm ‘independent of the knower’s subjective experiences of it’ (Lincoln et al., 2011, p.118). The positivist and post-positivist ontologies presume a uniformity of generating processes and outcomes, such as those which result in temperature or force, which can be predicted and measured, untainted by human perception (Erickson, 2011; Lincoln et al., 2011). Positivism has benefits of being parsimonious, applying scientific methods to ensure validity and reliability and

displaying strength through numbers (Whiteley, 2012). A specific aim of positivist study is to generalise, lifting theory above contextual boundaries.

However, the foundational criterion for positivism/post-positivism is that the object of the study is factual, observable or in some other way apprehensible. Scholars consider trust to be contextually based (Brandebo et al., 2013; Castle et al., 2012; Ferrin et al., 2008; Kramer, 1999; Rousseau et al., 1998) and this study cannot claim that issues relating to trust in this research context are already known.

Constructivist ontology holds that ‘reality’ is constructed as individuals form and ascribe meaning to objects and actions as they navigate their world (Creswell, 2014). Under a constructivist ontology, ‘reality’ is considered to be negotiated and co-constructed and is therefore local to time and place (Lincoln, et al., 2011).

The perceived non-uniformity of outcomes (meanings) from social processes (Erickson, 2011) leads the researcher towards particular research methodologies. The constructivist ontology, which is the position adopted for this study, is aligned with the research question, given that this study is exploring the difference between ‘received’ and ‘perceived’ trust antecedents, which regards trust as being subjective.

Table 3.1 Basic beliefs of alternative inquiry paradigms

	Positivist	Constructivist/Interpretivist
Ontology <i>What is the nature of reality</i>	Naïve realism <i>Belief in a single, objective and tangible ‘truth’ which can be studied and measured.</i>	Relativist <i>Realities are co-constructed, specific to the environment (time and place) and thus, multiple.</i>
Focus of interest	What is general, average and representative.	What is specific, unique and deviant.
Epistemology <i>What is accepted as ‘knowledge’; the relationship between the researcher and that being researched</i>	Objectivist/Dualist <i>The researcher has a neutral role in the research. As an ‘[o]bjective reality exists beyond the human mind’ (Weber, 2004, p. iv), the researcher and the subject being studied are independent (dualism).</i>	Subjectivist/Transactional <i>Findings are a co-creation from the interaction (transaction) between the subjects and researcher. Knowledge is socially constructed, rather than ‘discovered’. Researchers must understand the social context in which the data are produced to accurately reflect what the data mean to the study.</i>
Methodology <i>What is the process of the research</i>	Experimental/manipulative <i>Verification of hypotheses, primarily using quantitative methods. Replicable data are valued.</i>	Hermeneutical/dialectical <i>Qualitative methods used to elicit and refine hermeneutic data which is compared dialectically to gain understanding of the research phenomenon.</i>

Table adapted from Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 102-115 and Decrop, 2000, p. 337.

3.5 Epistemology (Interpretivist)

The research philosophy of a study articulates two interrelated issues. One is the nature of knowledge. The other is the relationship between the researcher and the knowledge sought (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Inherent in the positivist/post-positivist research approach is the assumption of an independently knowable reality (Decrop, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Consequently, such studies use scientific method to uncover ‘facts’ that await discovery; the researcher and the subject are independent, and the researcher’s world views and values have no impact on the study’s results (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). ‘Some researchers assume that features of the social environment ... have an objective reality, which means that these features exist independently of the individuals who created them or who observe them’ (Gall & Borg, 1996, p. 17).

However, the constructivist ontological stance adopted for this study holds that ‘reality’ is negotiated and co-constructed between people (Abbott, 1997; Lincoln et al., 2011; Mead, 1990; 1922; Willis, 2012). The associated epistemological view is interpretivism, which is this study’s position. The interpretivist assumption is that knowledge is socially constructed rather than ‘discovered’ (Decrop, 2000; Lincoln et al., 2011; Willis, 2012).

In interpretive research, meaning is disclosed, discovered, and experienced. The emphasis is on sensemaking, description, and detail. (Bhattacharya, 2012, p. 466)

Knowledge is thus a co-construction between the researcher and participants through their interactions, but also from academia’s socially constructed methods and meanings (Holton, 2007; Moran, 2002; Willis, 2012). Although some interpretivists place emphasis on the individual engaging in their own meaning-making, the majority of interpretivists assert that meaning-making is a social process within a group of people (Willis, 2012), with meaning affected by, and affecting, the context in which the people are situated.

The belief that knowledge is socially constructed by a group of people within a particular context drives the interpretivist to (1) understand the context in which the data are gathered, and (2) have theoretical sensitivity, or understanding of extant theory, yet bracketing this knowledge and privileging the data of the current study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Gibson & Hartman, 2014; Schrieber, 2001). This is discussed in more detail in Section 3.7 (Research Design).

Interpretivists assert that all research is influenced and shaped by the pre-existing theories and world view of the researchers. The terms, procedures, and data of research have meaning because a group of scholars has agreed upon that meaning. (Willis, 2012, p. 95)

Interpretivism has its roots in hermeneutics, sociology’s notion of *Verstehen* (the understanding of the ‘lived experience’) and phenomenology (Schwandt, 1998; Willis, 2012). So not surprisingly, interpretivism has a strong alignment with this study’s theoretical perspectives of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. The constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology both have ‘abiding concern for the life world, for the emic point of view, for understanding meaning, for grasping the actor's definition of a situation, for Verstehen’ (Schwandt, 1998, pp. 221–222).

The interpretive paradigm thus seeks to understand the world from the subjective theories and experiences of individuals. Meaning, as it is constructed by research participants, is gathered and interpreted to aid researcher understanding of the research issue being explored. The interpretive form of social enquiry focuses on participants' interpretation and sense-making, in this study in relation to trust within the Australian local government context.

It is notable that positivism is the most common methodological approach for trust research. A 2015 survey found that of the 167 leading trust researchers participating, 53 per cent took a positivist epistemological position and only four per cent an interpretivist position (Isaeva et al., 2015). An epistemological positivist approach encourages a research stance of examining dependent and independent variables to establish trust antecedents and outcomes (Siebert et al., 2016). However, scholars declare that the trust literature has reached a level of maturity where a more complex understanding of trust issues is appropriate and call for greater diversity in trust research methodology (Bachmann, 2011; Isaeva et al., 2015; Siebert et al., 2016), a request which is, in part, met by this interpretivist trust study.

3.6 Methodology (Qualitative)

Methodology is the process and pragmatic matters to enact the research, specifically, the strategy and methods of collecting data and the logic behind data analysis methods (Creswell et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Qualitative research, as adopted in this study, is primarily explanatory and insight-seeking. Within the local government context and specifically concerning blue-collar and white-collar employees, the aim of this study was to expose underlying issues relating to the socially constructed meaning as participants co-construct their meaning around trust. The study intent was, therefore, to access rich data and surface perceptions and opinions around trust relationships.

Qualitative research generally is associated with (Boeije, 2012; Bryman, 2012; Erickson, 2011):

1. a constructionist ontological position and interpretivist epistemological position;
2. a focus on expressions of meaning rather than numbers; and
3. inductive theory generation or insights from the research.

Qualitative research is based upon the assumption that human social interactions generate multiple beliefs, experiences and perspectives (Connelly, 2011; Moustakas, 1994; Whiteley, 2012). Although qualitative studies encompass diverse forms of research, their uniting purpose is to reveal social sense making processes, meanings and beliefs of participants (Boeije, 2012; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Lofland et al., 2006; Yin, 2011). Qualitative research aims to ‘make the [invisible] world visible’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3). Qualitative methodology is therefore appropriate when the research question is interested in unveiling both the expressions of meaning and the ‘lived experiences’ of participants (Tufford & Newman, 2011), as in the case of this research.

One of the research questions was to understand the impact of organisational structure upon trust within this study’s research context. Organisational structure includes the internal governance, information channels and how organisational actors are coordinated, monitored, rewarded and chastised (Amin & Cohendet, 2000; Chia, 1997; Daft, 2007; Keyton, 2011; Mintzberg, 1980; Raisch, 2008; Roy, 2008). Supporting this study’s choice of methodology, Altheide and Johnson (2013) assert that qualitative research is appropriate when investigating ‘complex social and bureaucratic processes whereby laws and policies are actually implemented in daily life’ (p. 385).

3.7 Research Design (Grounded Theory Method)

The research design chosen for this study was the grounded theory method. This is actually a family of research design methods that employ a systematic, inductive, and comparative approach with the aim of theory construction (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The literature simply refers to ‘grounded theory method’ as ‘grounded theory’ and it will be referred to as such in this thesis. Grounded theory aligns well with this study’s

theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Clarke, 2005).

Grounded theory is inherently symbolic interactionist ... The ontology, epistemology, method, and techniques of grounded theory are all steeped in symbolic interactionism, such that the two cannot be divorced. (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012, pp. 684–685)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) formulated grounded theory to offer researchers an alternative to the ‘extreme positivism that had permeated most social research’ (Suddaby, 2006, p. 633). Glaser and Strauss sought to develop an academically rigorous means for qualitative research to move from description to explanations that were grounded in the data and thus empirically defensible (Boadu & Sorour, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Suddaby, 2006).

[Grounded theory] is the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research ... Theory based on data can usually not be completely refuted by more data or replaced by another theory. Since it is too intimately linked to data, it is destined to last despite its inevitable modification and reformulation (Glaser & Strauss, 2006, pp. 2 & 4).

Although the aim of grounded theory is to generate theory, or insights towards theory building, these can be also achieved by other methods. However, grounded theory is the set of systematic and rigorous research procedures that are characterised by the following traits (Hood, 2007; Locke, 2011; Suddaby, 2006):

- theoretical sampling,
- emergent theory development from the data, as enabled by theoretical saturation of a study’s categories, and
- constant comparative analysis between the data and the tentative theoretical categories.

The present study identifies with Charmaz’s definition of grounded theory as ‘a method of qualitative inquiry in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process’ (Charmaz, 2011, p. 360). Qualitative studies, and particularly grounded research, emphasise data driving the emergent theory, rather than literature restricting classifications or concepts a priori (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Grounded theory honours participants’ experiences relevant to the research question (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012). The aim is to elicit participant

‘thoughts, ideas, reasoning, foresight, imagination, understanding, judgement, deciding, choosing, evaluating, speculating, and numerous other mental processes’ (Meltzer, 2003, p. 253).

Grounded theory is effective when researching in the contexts of asymmetrical levels of power and within organisations (Gioia et al., 2013). There is acceptance of the duality of participants considering their ‘structured’ self (as bound by organisational roles, tasks and procedures) and their ‘social’ selves in relations with other organisational actors (Suddaby, 2006; Whiteley, 2004).

‘Grounded research’ is an adaptation of grounded theory which is particularised to research in organisational and business settings (Whiteley, 2004), and this is the design employed in this study. Grounded research recognises the problematic nature of conducting grounded theory within organisations due to two issues.

- The pragmatic issues to obtain and retain access to the organisation and its employees.
- How certain political, industrial or organisational dimensions are treated by research participants as concrete ‘facts’, which sits uneasily with interpretivism.

When certain categories of meaning derived from the in-depth interviewing appeared to be very robust, in the sense that a group of respondents talked about them as though they had a factual quality, although they were not stated as facts, we considered them ‘socially stable’ for that group ... Conceptually, it meant taking ‘becoming’ ideas and giving them a ‘being’ quality.’ (Whiteley, 2004, p. 34)

Such ‘socially stable constructs’ may be treated as ‘quasi facts’ under grounded research, although this determination is not achieved lightly and is to be reflected transparently and explained within the documentation of the study (Whiteley, 2004).

Reflexivity is the continuous process of examining oneself as researcher, examining and confronting one’s personal assumptions and critically engaging in meta-cognition about the research (Mason, 2002). As such, reflexivity is considered to be the researcher’s reflection upon two interrelated targets: the researcher and the research process, or as Neill (2006) phrases it, the ‘affective’ and ‘effective’ components of qualitative research.

Glaser (2001, as cited in Neill, 2006) rejected reflexivity for grounded theory researchers, claiming the practice to be an unnecessary distraction as a researcher's effect upon the data is revealed through the 'constant comparison' analysis process. However, the dominant academic view is that reflexivity is entirely appropriate given that qualitative data are a co-creation between researcher and participant (Charmaz, 2011; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Neill, 2006). Thus, the goal of researcher reflexivity throughout the research process is to achieve 'sincerity' in the research and transparency of the researcher's subjective biases (Tracy, 2010).

This researcher engaged in reflexivity in every step of the research process. In particular, this researcher was aware that her background and position affected all elements of the study from choosing a research issue to selecting the research approach, particularly the elements of ontology, epistemology and methodology (Creswell, 2014; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Janesick, 2000).

Despite reflexive practices, as a qualitative researcher it is recognised that one can neither be fully neutral and detached (Mason, 2002) nor completely free of one's power or privileged position in the research (Orr & Bennett, 2009). However, self-awareness and the ability to 'stand outside' and question researcher assumptions supports a researcher to recognise, and avoid or make transparent their preconceptions and areas of bias (Malterud, 2001; Siebert et al., 2016; Tracy, 2010). Thus, scholars consider reflexivity to be a 'positive critical device' (Orr & Bennett, 2009, p. 86). Mason (2002) eloquently encapsulates this argument:

[I]f interviews are always social interactions, however structured or unstructured the researcher tries to make them, then it is inappropriate to see social interaction as 'bias' which can potentially be eradicated. From this point of view you cannot separate the interview from the social interaction in which it was produced (because you cannot separate 'facts' from contexts), and you should not try to do so. It is better to understand the complexities of the interaction, and try to develop a sense of how context and situation work in interview interactions, than to pretend that key dimensions can be controlled for (p 65) ... [thus] researchers should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their 'data'. (Mason, 2002, p. 7)

Additionally, each qualitative study is unique and so is unable to be conducted according to the 'one recipe' (Mason, 2002; Whiteley, 2002). Researcher reflexivity therefore supports advantageous modifications to qualitative research in response to a study's social context. An example of this in the present study was the researcher's reflexive realisation that she held an assumption that potential blue-collar participants would be able to pre-book a time to participate in an interview, in a similar manner to white-collar workers. This necessitated a pragmatic change wherein the researcher arranged to stay for a period of weeks at the depot to make herself available for ad hoc interviews. (Such research decisions were captured in the audit trail and presented later in this thesis, in Section 3.11.1).

Recognising that as a qualitative researcher, the researcher also takes the form of the 'research instrument' (Kvale, 2011; Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003) the assistance of a research peer and supervisor and the construction of a detailed audit trail, including a reflexive journal (Ahern, 1999) were utilised throughout the study to assist the reflexive process.

Although reflexivity was practiced throughout the research, the grounded theory method (Whiteley, 2004) comprises several stages. Figure 3.1 illustrates the stages as used for the present study, followed by discussion on each stage. However before discussing individual stages, it is pertinent to mention two issues relating to the flow between the research stages.

Firstly, as stipulated by grounded research method, the research in the present study is iterative; data collection and data analysis inform and influence each other (Charmaz, 2011). This is illustrated by the feedback loop between Stages 2 and 3 in Figure 3.1.

Secondly, as detailed earlier in the theoretical perspective discussion (Section 3.3), the symbolic interactionist and phenomenological research perspectives require the researcher to refrain from tainting the data with a priori theories or categories. This requires the researcher, as much as she is able, to 'bracket' her beliefs, emotions and theories (Tufford & Newman, 2011; Yin, 2011). From this assumption-free stance, the

phenomenological and symbolic interactionist approaches respectively aim to gain a tentative ‘foothold’ of understanding of participants’ meanings and experiences. This understanding is questioned by the researcher. Subsequent understanding facilitates progression to the next foothold, which is then questioned, on so on. Thus, the research progresses in a ‘zigzag’ fashion (Aspers, 2009) as depicted by the ‘zigzag’ arrows in Figure 3.1.

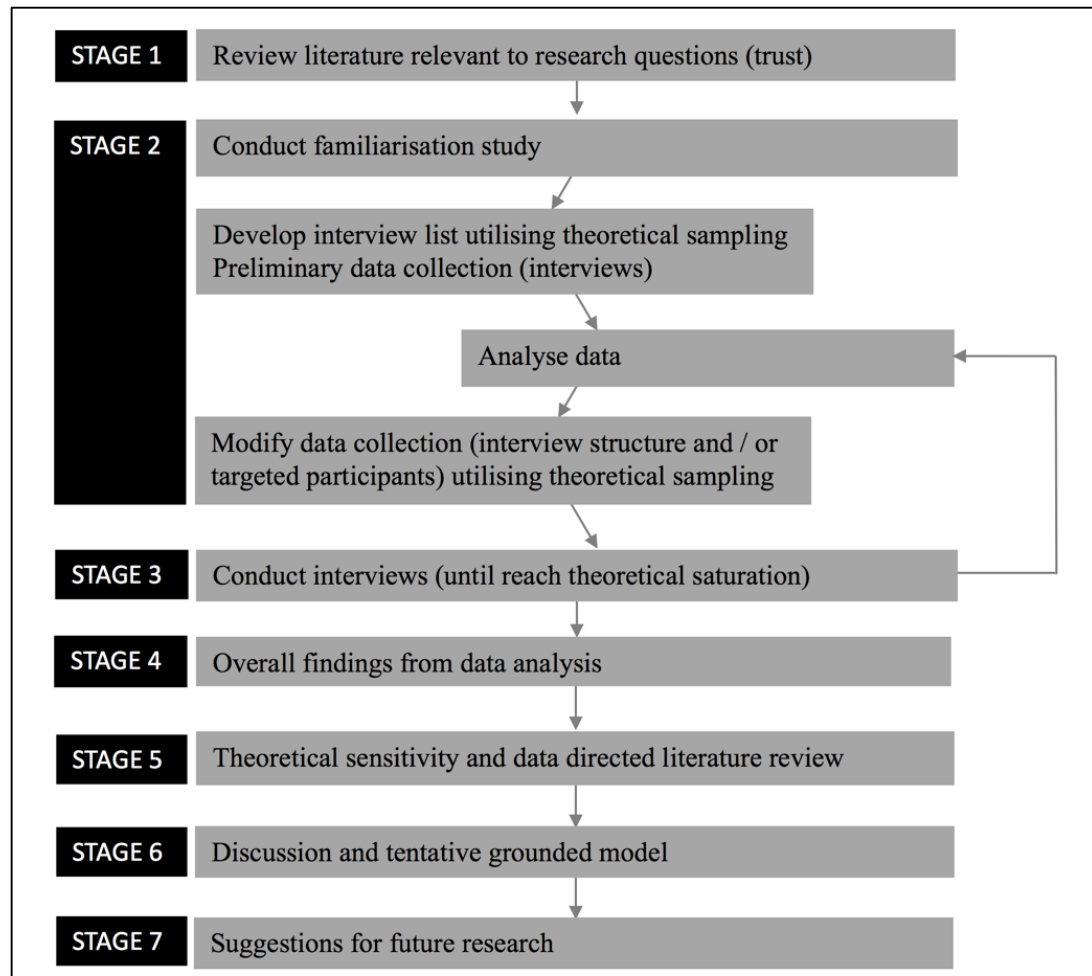


Figure 3.1 Stages of research (adapted from Whiteley, 2004)

3.7.1 Stage 1: Literature review going into the study

Early qualitative researchers refrained from reviewing relevant literature prior to or during research to prevent bias from prior academic knowledge. However, this resulted in impoverished research questions and duplicated research (Cleary et al., 2015; Schrieber, 2001; Silverman, 2000). Contemporary qualitative researchers now undertake a critical literature review to achieve theoretical sensitivity regarding the

research question and appropriate methodology for the research (Cleary et al., 2015; Schrieber, 2001; Silverman, 2000).

The qualitative researcher conducts a more modest literature review going into the study than would be the case in quantitative research. An exhaustive literature review is required for quantitative research for the purposes of developing hypotheses and a predictive model. However, in qualitative research the objective is to become familiar with the literature surrounding the research question to ensure the study is 'theoretically informed, but not theoretically pre-formed' (Charmaz, 2007, p. 80). This 'pre-knowledge' necessitates the use of a technique known as 'bracketing'; a conscious setting aside of knowledge gained from the literature (Ahern, 1999) to privilege the data. Thus, the role of the literature review in qualitative research is informing without necessarily contributing to a predictive model the research then seeks to prove or disprove.

3.7.2 Stage 2: Conduct a familiarisation study

The qualitative research literature recommends a familiarisation study prior to data collection as preparation for data collection in an unfamiliar context (Whiteley, 2002; Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006). A familiarisation study is similar to a quantitative research pilot study which tests data collection instruments such as a survey, but is typified by a wider scope and greater depth (Chenail, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2011). Because the researcher was the data collection instrument (the interviewer) in this study (Chenail, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2011), the familiarisation study prepared the researcher to gain 'intimate familiarity' (Blumer, 1969) with the research context.

[T]he more comfortable the respondent is and the closer the researcher can come to [the research participant's] ways of communicating, the more likely it is that the quality of data will be improved. (Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006, p. 74)

In alignment with the literature, the familiarisation study supported the researcher to achieve greater depth of understanding of the 'research participants' lives as well as ... knowledge of their worlds, actions, and meanings' (Charmaz, 2007, p. 78).

This researcher worked in an office environment in a local government and so was familiar with the elements such as terminology and nonverbal communication pertinent to an Australian local government white-collar context. However, following Putnam and Fairhurst's (2001) claim that language, and hence meaning, can vary within an industry, there was no assumption that these attributes were consistent across the blue-collar local government environment.

In many ways, language as an artefact of organizations reflects occupation, department and organizational role. (Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001, p. 83)

For the present research, the familiarisation study was conducted with blue-collar workers at local government in the same metropolitan region as the research organisation. The familiarisation study encompassed piloting the draft interview and discussing the interview questions and logistics for (1) acceptability of the researcher and interview questions, and (2) enhanced understanding between the researcher and the blue-collar workers (Satchell & Marriott, 1996; Whiteley, 2002; Whiteley & Whiteley, 2006). The resulting changes to the interview protocol and questions were captured in the audit trail (Section 3.11).

Although a familiarisation study cannot provide complete understanding of the context, it nonetheless supported the researcher in developing cultural and linguistic sensitivity and refined the research process for the blue-collar context (Chenail, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2011).

3.7.3 Stage 3: Interviewing participants

The data collection method utilised was individual, in-depth, face-to-face interviews. The literature indicates that these types of interviews are productive in eliciting data on sensitive topics (Schrieber, 2001) – in this case, issues and insights into trust relationships.

The essence of good qualitative research design turns on the use of a set of procedures that are simultaneously open-ended and rigorous and that do justice to the complexity of the social setting under study. (Janesick, 2000, p. 379)

Interviews were conducted until theoretical saturation, also known as ‘theoretical redundancy’ (Holton, 2007; Schrieber, 2001), was reached. This is the point when the study has exhausted the themes and meanings that participants have of the phenomena, as indicated during analysis of the data when no new categories or properties emerge (Holton, 2007). When this occurs, there is sufficient ‘conceptual density’ (Suddaby, 2006) to ensure the study findings are lifted above description to an abstract theoretical level and thus drive theory development (Corbin & Morse, 2003; Holton, 2007; Moran, 2002; Smith, 2016).

Theoretical saturation is achieved through constant comparison of incidents (indicators) in the data to elicit the properties and dimensions of each category (code). This constant comparing of incidents continues until the process yields the interchangeability of indicators, meaning that no new properties or dimensions are emerging from continued coding and comparison (Holton, 2007, p. 265).

However, because data collection and analysis occur concurrently in grounded theory, Stern (2007) advises that a researcher can conclude that theoretical saturation has been reached during data collection as well as during data analysis. She recounts an occasion of interviewing for a study wherein, despite the traumatic event being discussed by her research participant (as a child, witnessing his mother shooting dead his father), she was bored as it was a repetition of the categories and category properties already collected. In a similar manner, theoretical saturation initially became evident to this researcher within data collection. However, the analysis supported this conclusion as no new categories or category properties emerged from the later data.

Data collection in this study occurred until theoretical saturation. As a general guide, saturation is believed to occur after 12 interviews of a particular demographic (Guest et al., 2006). Accordingly, it was tentatively estimated that 60 interviews may need to be conducted. In total, 55 interviews were conducted (see Figure 3.2).

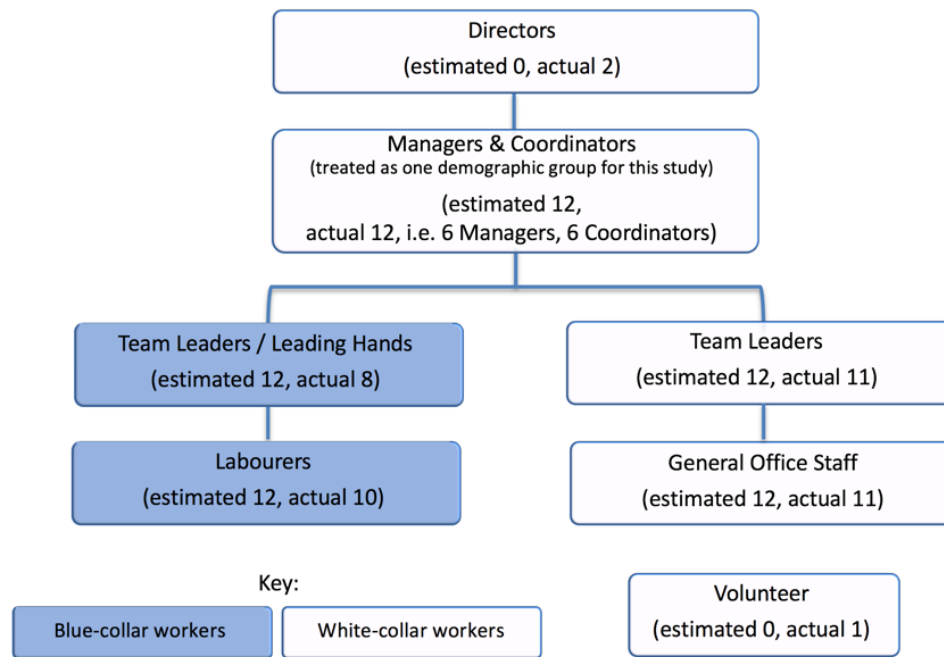


Figure 3.2 Estimated (60) and actual (55) number of interviewees, by demographic group

Although the initial research design excluded senior management (chief executive officer and the directors), social science is ‘interpreted within the institutional contexts and social practices where they are embedded and practiced’ (Decrop, 2000; Käufer & Chemero, 2015; Levin & Greenwood, 2011; Sokolowski, 2007). So an opportunity to interview two of the directors of the organisation as well as a volunteer who worked weekly with the organisation was capitalised upon to add further depth of understanding of the research context.

In grounded theory everything is data. This means that, when the grocery store clerk learns that the researcher is studying house fires and she begins to talk about when her house burned down, the researcher listens and learns. Depending upon the quality of information relayed, the researcher may give it more or less weight than other data, but this woman has shared data that also go into the pot with the rest. (Schrieber, 2001, p. 65)

The inclusion of the directors and the volunteer thus required a slight modification to the research design but remained within the parameters of the research aims accepted at candidacy.

Qualitative interviewing is described as ‘a flexible and powerful tool to capture the voices and the ways people make meaning of their experience’ (Rabionet, 2011, p. 563). Research interviews can be classified as structured, unstructured or semi-structured, the last being located on a continuum between the other two (Chadwick et al., 1984; Corbin & Morse, 2003; Whiteley et al., 2003). Structured interviews script not only the interview questions but also the behaviour and demeanour of the interviewer to ensure consistency between interviews (Yin, 2011). Structured interviews are utilised in quantitative studies, often in the form of a survey or poll, and typically pose closed questions designed to elicit limited responses, as predetermined by the researcher (Yin, 2011). In contrast, semi-structured interviews utilise a framework of questions that are generally open-ended and adaptive to the unfolding interview and relationship between researcher and participant (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Semi-structured interviews afford further probing within an interview, which can be invaluable for the researcher to further explore events and meanings with the participant and clarify inconsistencies (Barribal & While, 1994).

The aim of fully unstructured interviews is to achieve full ‘conversational intimacy’ in which participants recount their story in the manner and pace of their own volition; thus, in comparison with other types of interviews, this provides participants the greatest level of control (Corbin & Morse, 2003). The classic unstructured interview originates from ethnographic research (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Interview questions are not planned but rather data arise from interactions in the field as the researcher and participant naturally converse (Decrop, 2000).

This study selected semi-structured interviews for data collection as they facilitate access to the subjective context, experiences, beliefs and perspectives of interviewees while retaining a focus on the phenomenon of interest. This is particularly relevant when (1) conducting exploratory research (Fontana & Frey, 2005) such as this study, and (2) for researching internally constructed and co-constructed issues (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011; Yin, 2011) such as trust.

Semi-structured interviews were considered appropriate due to this study’s research emphasis upon understanding (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The semi-structured interviews used in this study were designed to utilise dyadic social interaction and discourse to

reveal the meanings assigned by the research participants, drawing upon their subjective experiences and exploring symbolic representations of objects or events.

Following Muethel and Hoegl's (2012) model for conducting interviews within a trust study, at the commencement of interviews participants were asked for their subjective interpretation of trust. Participant responses all alluded to vulnerability and confidence in this vulnerability not being exploited, which aligns with this study's definition of trust. Then the definition of trust by Six (2007), as used by this study, was read to participants. Thus, the researcher had confidence that the participants of this study had a consistent understanding of trust.

As advised by the literature, interview questions were initially deliberately broad to elicit the participants' meanings and reveal what they considered important (Creswell, 2014) while also minimising 'priming' participants and interviewer bias (Doyen et al., 2012). Thus, research participants were invited to tell their stories before answering specific questions. As discussed earlier, the theoretical perspectives of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology, as well as the grounded theory research design, all privilege the participant's voice, allowing the meanings of the participants to inform and drive the study results rather than extant theory. A semi-structured interview is profitable for this purpose as it allows 'the subjects to organize their own descriptions, emphasizing what they themselves find important' (Kvale, 1983, p. 173) while retaining focus on the research question.

The literature advises that utilising interviews for data collection is 'heavily dependent on people's capacities to verbalize, interact, conceptualize and remember' (Mason, 2002, p. 64). Therefore, this study included use of the critical incident technique (Chell, 1998) to counter the issue with recall. This technique elicits events and behaviours that stand out as being 'best or 'worst' and is considered particularly suitable for eliciting data on trust (Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012), providing data on the cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the 'incident' (Chell, 1998).

Researchers note that the 'critical' nature usually results in participants having a clear memory and good recall of the incident, the context and the meaning attributed to the incident (Chell, 1998), which was also evidenced in this research. The salience

attributed by participants of critical issues supports analysis and category development as the recount of the critical incident tends to be distinct and fulsome.

By using the worst – or best – cases, the characteristics of the phenomenon or experience we are studying become most obvious, clear, and emerge more quickly and cleanly. (Morse, 2007, p. 324)

Furthermore, researchers consider this technique suitable when researching within organisations from an interpretative perspective (Chell, 1998; Gremler, 2004). The critical incident technique is valued in trust research as it circumvents espoused views of trust and instead elicits rich description of actual trust impacting events (Butler, 1991; Chell, 1998; Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012). Additionally, the critical incident technique is effective for comparative work (Chell, 1998), which, in this study, involved juxtaposing perceived and received trust factors and trust antecedents for blue- and white-collar subordinates.

During the research, another advantage of critical incidents became apparent; such events appeared to have been widely discussed between organisational actors, which facilitated purposeful sampling.

The literature advises collecting both positive and negative critical incidents (Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012). Balanced questioning was also a preferred ethical consideration for the participating individuals and the organisation. Therefore, in this study interview questions were posed to participants regarding their experiences that increased and decreased interpersonal trust. Furthermore, pragmatically, the literature advises researchers to be mindful of potential issues that may jeopardise ongoing access to the organisation (Whiteley, 2004; Yin, 2011), which may have been the case if there was not balanced questioning.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews are highly interactive (Lofland et al., 2006) and thus may generate affect or emotional distress for the participant. This may be more likely when using the critical incident technique, so the interviewer must be able to respond appropriately (Chell, 1998). As noted later (Table 3.3), the protocol of this study was for the researcher to be sensitive when a participant was experiencing an emotive response. Guided by the literature, the procedure was then for the researcher to offer to pause, or discontinue discussing a particular issue (Corbin & Morse, 2003;

Cowles, 1988; Liamputtong, 2007). However, Corbin and Morse (2003) advise that a researcher should not assume that physical signs of emotion, such as tears, to indicate that the participant wishes to discontinue, but rather to offer these options, placing control with the participant. In the present study, an emotive response became evident during two interviews in which participants were discussing a breach of trust. However, on both occasions, after a brief pause of the interview, these participants desired to continue the interview, indicating a motivation to help the understanding of trust and potentially prevent others from undergoing a similar situation.

[In] our experience, which includes many years of conducting interviews on sensitive topics, has been that participants react positively – and in fact, many are grateful ... A frequent reason cited by persons for consenting or requesting to participate in a study is the hope that telling their story will help others. (Corbin & Morse, 2003, p. 336)

Corbin and Morse (2003) noted that unstructured interviews, in particular, give considerable control to the participant, which they believe lessens the likelihood that interview discussion may cause distress. While the present study utilises semi-structured interviews, the interview protocol aimed to increase participant control. Prior to the commencement of each interview, the researcher advised the participant that she may stop the recording whenever she wished, calling attention to the stop button on the recorder and placing the recorder on the table next to the participant.

Building rapport and trust with research participants is vital when probing potentially sensitive issues, particularly in the early stages of an interview (Fontana & Frey, 1998), an experience confirmed by trust researchers (Saunders, 2014). Corbin and Morse (2003) describe the interview as containing four phases. The pre-interview phase is the commencement of the face-to-face interaction wherein the interviewer explains the purpose of the research and issues outlined on, in this case, an informed consent form (Appendix B:

Informed Consent Form). The tentative phase is the commencement of the interview questions, in which the interviewee is likely to be actively noticing and alert to the interviewer's verbal and nonverbal responses. The immersion phase is considered to be when both participants are gradually engaged with, and then immersed in, the 'story'. This is when the interviewee may re-live events and exhibit positive or negative emotions.

The emergence phase of the interview occurs as both participants disengage from the content and the interview 'shifts to a less emotional level ... [and participants] achieve a level of comfort and readiness' (Corbin & Morse, 2003, p. 344) before parting. Given the expected sensitivity of the research topic, the preparation for the interviews paid particular attention to each phase, considering the need for the interviewee to feel safe to disclose information, facilitating higher quality data.

The experience from the interviews, which admittedly were only those participants who volunteered to be interviewed, was that deeply personal information was shared, indicating that the participants trusted the researcher to honour confidentiality and anonymity. The literature advises not only that researchers should build trust within the interview but also that trust building outside individual interviews is salient to participant recruitment (Huang et al., 2007; Morrison et al., 2012). The researcher's perception confirms this; given the potential sensitivity of the research topic (trust within the workplace), it was vital to build trust with a potential participant prior to an interview. It was important that participants were aware that the researcher was carrying out independent research supported by her university. Activities aimed at informing prospective participants included the researcher attending team briefings to promote participation in the study and make it known that she was available to answer queries.

The participants for the research were from within one local government authority. As researchers in business settings attest, a precondition of studying in the organisation was that the management was willing to provide access to its employees (Silverman, 2000). One of the organisation's stated values was trust and, thus, the organisation was willing to allow staff to be interviewed during work hours.

3.7.3.1 Sampling method

The literature identifies three types of sampling methods in grounded theory: convenience sampling, purposeful sampling and theoretical sampling (Morse, 2007). Initial data collection for this research was exploratory, with interviewees participating based upon opportunity (convenience sampling). At this early stage of data collection, participants were not so much chosen as self-nominating.

As data collection and analysis occurred concurrently, convenience sampling was gradually replaced with purposeful sampling, in which potentially ‘information rich’ participants were targeted (Boeije, 2012; Coyne, 1997; Patton, 1990; Yin, 2011). There were multiple levels of analytical interest in this study (Decrop, 2000):

1. individuals (from interest in specific act and behaviours);
2. roles (in relation to events);
3. relationships (arising from regularly occurring behaviours); and
4. the setting (in relation to meanings and perspectives).

Thus, purposeful sampling in this study was used to ensure representation from relevant hierarchical levels in the organisation (roles). Theoretical sampling was also used to fully explore each tentative category emerging from the data and concurrent analysis. Theoretical sampling became increasingly relevant not only as tentative categories began to emerge from the data but as trust impacting events and their associated actors were identified from the data (Aspers, 2009; Decrop, 2000; Goulding, 2005; Starks & Trinidad, 2016; Whiteley, 2004). Potential participants were targeted based on the researcher’s belief that an individual may be able to deepen, verify or contradict a tentative assertion (Boeije, 2012; Charmaz, 2011). This is classic grounded theory methodology wherein the ‘process of data collection is *controlled* by the emergent theory’ (Glaser & Strauss, 2006, p. 45, emphasis in original).

Therefore the data, as participant’s theories, determined what data to seek next (Boeije, 2012; Milliken & Schreiber, 2012).

Potential participants were recruited through multiple modes; a poster, an email to all staff with computer access, the researcher presenting at team meetings and the researcher sited at the organisation over a period of weeks. Participants were

interviewed at a location mutually agreed upon, which ranged from the organisation's private meeting rooms to offices, local parks and coffee shops.

Sampling within a grounded research framework aims to reveal the 'dimensional *scope* of the phenomena of interest, but also enable comprehensive description of the *trajectory* of the phenomena over time' (Morse, 2007, p. 229, emphasis in original). This was evident in the theoretical sampling in this study. The data encompassed significant events that occurred years ago that appeared to have present impact upon trust in work colleagues, so the resulting theoretical sampling was weighted towards those who had been with the organisation over several years, tracking the path of trust from past trust impacting events.

However, Bryman (1988) is critical of theoretical sampling on two fronts. The first critique he proposes is that interviews only need be conducted until a developing category is saturated. This may occur due to two reasons.

1. If the researcher is not rigorous in seeking both confirming and disconfirming cases. However, in contradiction to Bryman's point, data collection does not automatically conclude when a category is saturated, but also when no new categories are emerging from the data, indicating the entire theory in the study context is fully developed (Morse, 2007).
2. If outliers are ignored (Morse, 2007).

Both are challenges to credible and rigorous research, although the second point may be more evident to the reader if disclosed. Therefore, any decision to exclude data must be justifiable, defensible and transparent. Although no data were excluded in the present study, the protocol for this research was to discuss potential exclusions with the researcher's doctoral supervisors to support a critical review of the issue. If the decision was then taken to exclude data, it would have then been transparently included as a study decision in the 'Rigour' section.

Bryman's second concern is that an emergent theory is distorted by participants who are 'marginal to the social setting' (Bryman, 1988, p. 117). However, a constructivist ontology holds 'reality' to be local and co-created (Lincoln et al., 2011), giving greater salience to local theory, regardless how marginal the setting, rather than more generalisable theory. Bryman's concern may arise from a quantitative paradigm

wherein sampling occurs to achieve participant representation reflective of a wider population to improve generalisability of findings (Bryman, 1988). In contrast, sampling in qualitative research ‘typically aim[s] to represent a wide range of perspectives and experiences rather than to replicate their frequency in the wider population’ (Ziebland & McPherson, 2006, p. 407). Part of the rigour for qualitative research is, therefore, to be explicit about the context in which the study is conducted, so that the reader may make informed decisions regarding the applicability of the inductive theory to other contexts (Noble & Smith, 2015). A key is that the researcher does not overstate transferability; rather, that judgement is left to the reader. This is discussed further in the ‘Rigour’ section.

3.7.4 Stage 4: Data analysis/findings

Analysis is the interplay between the researchers and data. It is both science and art. It is science in the sense of maintaining a certain degree of rigor and by grounding analysis in data. Creativity manifests itself in the ability of researchers to aptly name categories, ask stimulating questions, make comparisons, and extract an innovative, integrated, realistic scheme from masses of unorganized raw data. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 13)

All interviews in the present study were recorded. To prepare the data for analysis, the audio recordings of these interviews were transcribed according to two general design goals (Edwards, 1993), listed here in order of priority.

1. Preserving data in a manner that is ‘authentic’ to the interaction while ensuring participant anonymity.
2. Transcription to facilitate analysis – for example, being easy to read.

Transcriptions were therefore verbatim, minus false starts and disfluencies (such as ‘err’ and ‘umm’). References to an individual’s or team’s name, role and other potentially identifying details were obscured by replacing the terms with a generic word in square brackets. Words that were unable to be transcribed due to unclear audio were replaced by a time stamp of the audio in square brackets. Examples of both transcription protocols are contained in the following transcription excerpt:

... it won't go past [coordinator] or [manager].... It won't go past [7:47]. (Participant #31)

The data were analysed according to grounded theory systemic procedures. The unit of analysis (hermeneutic unit) was an utterance connected to the research question. Utterances became *invivo* codes, which ‘keep the data rooted in the participant’s own language’ (Saldaña, 2013, p. 7). Codes were then categorised into initial categories of meaning, with temporary status. They were treated to constant comparison; questioning relevance and applicability and merging or separating codes from categories as appropriate.

Coding and analysis occurred concurrently throughout the data collection, which facilitated modification of interview questions over the course of the research. Thus, the interview questions were informed by deeper knowledge from previous interviews and experiences ‘in the field’ (Creswell, 1998) and supported data based theory construction rather than data description (Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 2006).

Analysis was conducted in alignment with Charmaz’s (2011) recommendations; comparing data to allow tentative codes to emerge, then contrasting the data against the codes. The codes were analysed to identify alike codes, which became tentative categories. The data and codes were contrasted with these categories and revised accordingly. Remaining categories were then regarded as concepts, which were juxtaposed against each another as well as concepts from the literature.

Analysis is a breaking up, separating, or disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements, or units. With facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns, or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data into meaningful or comprehensible fashion. (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 107)

Rich data are complex and analysis is fluid and ‘messy’; groupings grow, are tested, discarded, merged or concepts simplified and split (Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Richards, 1999). To facilitate this process, data were managed electronically, utilising the ethnographic software ATLAS.ti (Version: Mac 1.5.1). This software tool can display the network visually (see Figure 3.3), stimulating critical thinking and exploration of tentative relationships (Friese, 2014; 2017). The strength of ATLAS.ti is the ease and fluidity of systematic data analysis and constant comparison, allowing the researcher to continually construct, deconstruct and reconstruct categories of meaning.

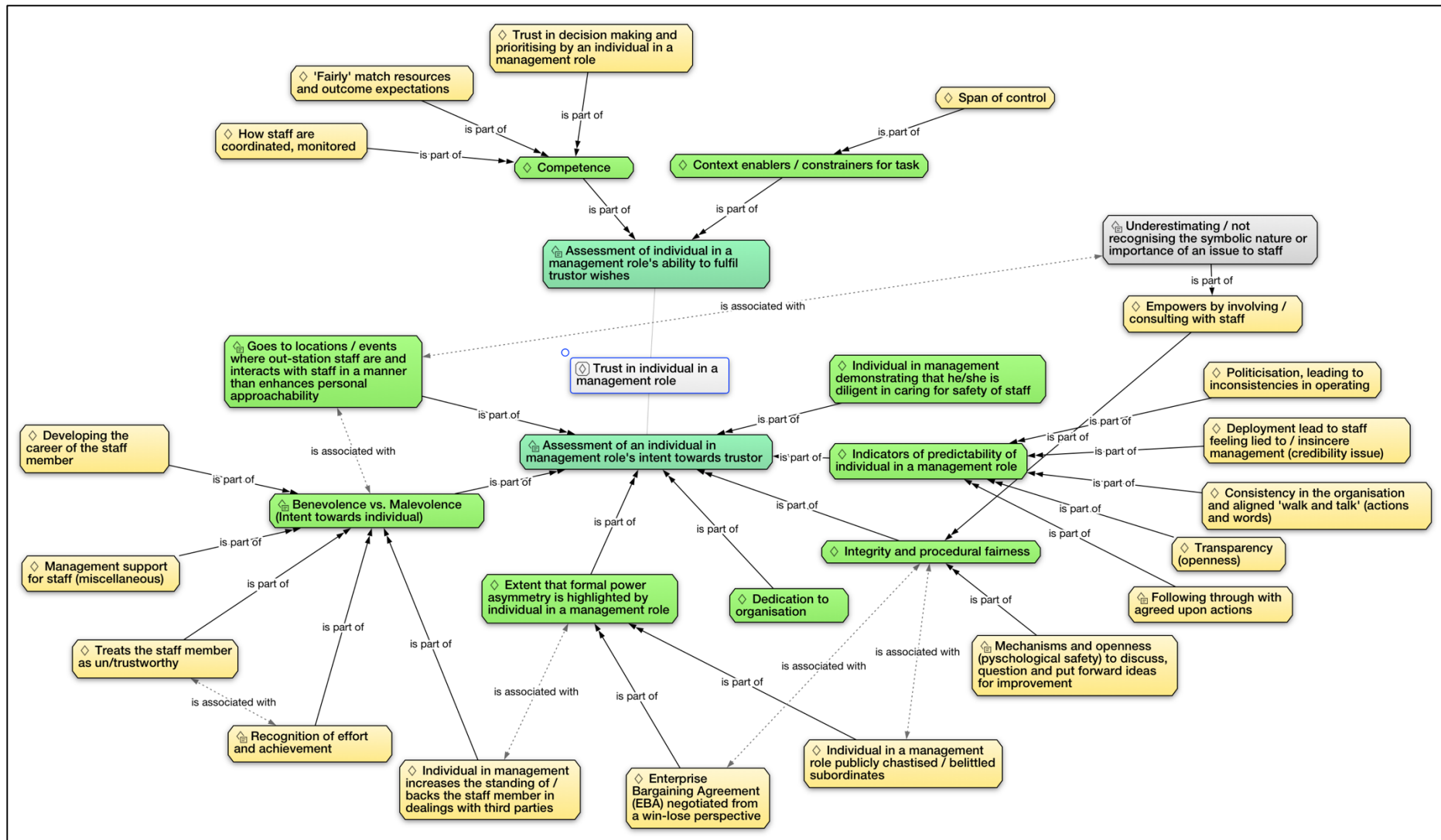


Figure 3.3 Example of a network view from ATLAS.ti

The type of coding used in a study is selected with reference to the study's theoretical approach, the methodological needs or in response to the data during analysis as an emergent conceptual framework (Saldaña, 2013). Saldaña (2013) also advises that guidance from a research mentor is obtained and that the selected coding is piloted to ascertain the appropriateness and possibilities. Both strategies are employed in this study.

Grounded research analysis encompasses the following coding methods (Creswell et al., 2007; Saldaña, 2013).

1. First cycle coding may be in vivo, process or initial coding. This is used to divide the data into individual segments (codes) relevant to the research question.
2. Second cycle coding may be focused, axial or theoretical (also known as 'selective') coding. This compares, prioritises and organises codes by their relationships to each other.

Driven by the grounded theory approach of this research, the coding utilised was initial, axial and theoretical coding (Saldaña, 2013). Initial coding segmented the data. Axial coding was then employed to identify tentative relationships between categories and the characteristics, such as contexts, conditions and consequences for the categories and to facilitate the identification of dominant categories (Boeije, 2012; Saldaña, 2013). Theoretical coding was then employed to link all categories and sub-categories to the core category, thus moving the analysis into a conceptual framework (Saldaña, 2013).

The GT [grounded theory] researcher does not 'compose' the 'story'.
GT is not description, and the unfolding is emergent from the careful
tedium of the constant comparative method and theoretical sampling.
(Glaser, 2002b, p. 4)

As is recommended for grounded research, the researcher utilised written memos and diagramming as relevant throughout coding and analysis (Schrieber, 2001). In this manner, potential theories, interpretations and relationships between codes, as instigated by a particular interview or recurring theme in the data, could be captured at the time and later explored in more depth (Decrop, 2000).

One of the functionalities of ATLAS.ti is being able to link memos to data from multiple interview transcripts, which facilitated the later review of potential theories and relationships between codes and categories. For example, although subsequent data did not support it, one of the memos – during analysis of an interviewee where the local government employee was also a ratepayer within the locality – was to investigate in subsequent relevant interviews whether the plurality of viewpoints from the different ‘roles’ may impact trust an employee’s trust of other staff in the organisation.

3.7.5 Stage 5: Theoretical sensitivity: Data-directed literature review

Theoretical sensitivity originated with Blumer (1969), and describes the process by which theory is developed from the data and concepts from the literature are brought into a study if, and only if, the data support the concept (Schrieber, 2001).

[B]y constantly comparing sensitizing concepts with data, the researcher can move beyond preconceptions towards the construction of a fully developed theory that is rooted in and explains the data.
(Schrieber, 2001, p. 60)

The activities involved in theoretical sensitivity are (a) constant comparison between the data, tentative categories emerging from the data and potential concepts from academic literature, and (b) the researcher remaining open to new theoretical possibilities (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Gibson & Hartman, 2014; Jopling, 1996). Potential concepts from the literature and tentative categories (‘groupings’ of like data) that do not fully explain and capture the data are discarded. In the present study, a variety of concepts that had potential to explain the data were examined but discarded as there was not a complete fit with this study’s data. As advised by Schrieber (2001), in determining fit, particular attention was paid to negative cases (data that disconfirm the theory being tested) to ensure fit was not being ‘forced’. The researcher also engaged in critical peer discussions with her doctoral supervisor and peer doctoral candidate (Ahern, 1999; Pieters & Dornig, 2013; Schrieber, 2001). A good ‘fit’ of extant theory to the data for grounded research is that the potential theory not only fits the data but ‘must be immediately recognizable

to participants ... [and] must compellingly illuminate the action and interaction surrounding the phenomenon of study' (Schrieber, 2001, p. 78).

Thus, the process of theoretical sensitivity facilitates the abstraction of the research from the particulars of the data to a theory that is clearly and transparently linked to the study's data. In this manner, a study not only extends the theory regarding the phenomenon of interest (in this case, trust), but also extends an associated explanatory theory (which in this case, is primarily attribution theory).

3.7.6 Stage 6: Discussion and tentative grounded model

The goal of good grounded theory research is the construction of a parsimonious theory with concepts linked together in explanatory relationships that, in accounting for the variation in the data, explains how participants resolved their basic social problem. (Schrieber, 2001, p. 78)

The culmination of the data collection and analysis is the development of proposed categories and their higher-level concepts, and of the relationships between these categories and concepts, with the aim of providing a parsimonious, tentative model of trust. As exploratory grounded research, this study makes claims 'about the plausibility of the theorized elements – not about the extent of their expression in a population' (Locke, 2011, p. 40). Thus, the proposed model is offered as a tentative grounded model.

3.7.7 Stage 7: Suggestions for future research

Following discussion of the results of the study and tentative grounded model of trust, the researcher presents recommendations for future trust research (Agarwal et al., 2011; Murray, 2011). As the present study is exploratory research, future research will be required to refine, confirm, expand or reject the tentative trust model presented.

3.8 Summary of Research Design

This first section of the 'Methodology' chapter has discussed the philosophy, theoretical perspectives, ontology, epistemology and methodology and detailed the research design for this study. The following table (Table 3.2) presents an overview of these points, and illustrates the connection between all elements of the research from the research question and objectives to the way data were collected, analysed,

interpreted and results presented (Whiteley, 2004). The section following the table presents and discusses this study's limitations, ethical concerns, rigour and audit trail.

Table 3.2 Summary of research design for this study

Design Issue	Perspective	Reasoning	Researcher action
Philosophy	Becoming	No facts or concrete observations have yet been established	Allow emergence Resist closure
Sociological/Theoretical Perspective	1. Phenomenological	Searching for participant's accounts of their experiences	Ask questions to elicit participants recounting their experiences, e.g. Tell me about a time when one of your staff did something that lowered your trusted in them
	2. Symbolic interactionist	Searching for participant's meanings and theories	Ask questions such as: What does this mean to you? What led you to believe this?
Ontology <i>The nature of 'reality'</i>	Constructivist	Studying a social setting to gather multiple meanings	Go into the field. Suspend researcher 'reality'
Epistemology <i>How participants and the researcher 'know what they know'</i>	Interpretivist	Nature of knowledge is interpretive	Participants' knowledge has priority Adopt a range of relationships from mutual to facilitative The stance of the researcher needs to be resolved
Methodology <i>The process of the research</i>	Qualitative	Search for understanding and interpretation	Reflect this in the data collection and analysis methods and approach
<i>Qualitative Design</i>	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	<i>Appropriate for process questions: questions about experiences over time or changes</i>	<i>Derive theory from data</i>
Data Collection	Purposeful sampling Semi-structured interviews	Understanding is embedded within the tacit dimension	Use data collection method to 'dredge' tacit knowledge
Data analysis	Systematic procedures	To ensure replicability of procedures and transparency	Unit of analysis, coding (<i>open, axial and selective</i>), categorising, constant comparison, theoretical sensitivity, identifying deviant cases and comprehensive audit trail to support reflexivity and transparency
Data management	Technology aided	Software to support construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of categories of meaning	Verbatim transcription although removing 'ums', 'ahhs' and false starts Use it to support researcher reasoning Adhere to data analysis procedures

Based upon: Whiteley, 2012 and (text in italics) Creswell et al., 2007

3.9 Limitations

A key limitation of the present study is that it is exploratory research. Although the research generated rich data, it utilised a small sample size (55 interviews). In addition, all data were obtained from within one local government authority. However, there are many contextual similarities in the ways local government authorities conduct their business. A complete spectrum of trust views may not have been achieved; although theoretical sampling occurred, due to the voluntary nature of participation there was an element of self-selection in participation. In recognition of these limitations, the model that emerged from the findings is presented as a tentative trust model, with further investigation recommended as future research, as discussed in Chapter 5.

3.10 Ethics

This study involves human participants and therefore was conducted in strict accordance with the Australian NHMRC *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* and Curtin University's protocols and ethics. Ethics approval (Form C) was obtained following candidacy. Potential research participants were advised of the purpose of the research, process, costs and benefits of taking part in the research verbally and through an informed consent form (Appendix B). This form stated the voluntary nature of participation and guaranteed all data would be anonymous and confidential. This was achieved by removing all names and identifying aspects in the transcripts and allocating coded identities per participant (Christians, 2011). The researcher and interviewee signed the informed consent form as acknowledgment and agreement on these issues prior to commencement of their interview.

3.11 Rigour

Whereas quantitative rigour involves internal and external validity, generalisability and objectivity, these elements are not goals of qualitative research. Rather, rigour for qualitative research pertains to ensuring the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Tracy (2010) adds that

qualitative research rigour should include meaningful coherence of the study, researching a ‘worthy’ topic/making a significant contribution, and the influence and effect of the research. How each of these aspects of rigour have been addressed in this study is captured in Table 3.3, although key aspects are provided in more detail here.

Academics advise that the epistemology for qualitative research is that the researcher seeks to create a close relationship between the researcher and ‘that being researched’, which may lead to researcher ‘spend[ing] time in field with participants, and becom[ing] an “insider”’ (Creswell, 1998, p. 75). To promote the research to potential participants, the researcher utilised various methods; posters, emails and attending team meetings. However, the most successful strategy was to be physically present at the different locations of the organisation for a period of weeks. This introduced a risk of the researcher ‘going native’, whereby the ‘researcher loses his or her awareness of being a researcher and is seduced by the participants’ perspective’ (Bryman, 1988, p. 97). To counter this, the researcher both reminded herself and was reminded by her supervisor of the independent nature of the study.

In this researcher’s experience, conducting one-on-one, face-to-face interviews as participants revealed deeply personal thoughts, feelings and experiences engendered a strong degree of empathy. The advantage of being present at the organisation’s depot for several weeks was that the researcher was exposed to greater detail of participants’ work lives, which supported the researcher to transition from etic (outsider) to emic (local) view, potentially improving data quality (Bryman, 1988).

[Etic and emic] describe behavior from two different standpoints, which lead to results which shade into one another. The etic viewpoint studies behavior as from the outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behavior as from inside the system. (Pike, 1967, p. 37)

However, as the analysis occurred concurrently with the data collection, the research question anchored the researcher to the study; thus, the advantage of this research methodology was gaining insight into the emic viewpoint while minimising disadvantage of ‘feeling overly sympathetic toward participants’ (Kleinman & Kolb, 2011, p. 425). The researcher reflexivity, as discussed in Section 3.7.3, engaged the researcher in viewing herself and her assumptions as critically as possible.

There were two major design elements for this study driving rigour responsibilities:

- the foundational belief that meaning is derived from social processes (Erickson, 2011); and
- the researcher was the tool for data collection (Chenail, 2011; Kvale, 2011).

Consequently, reflexivity and openness were required to manage researcher identity, potential researcher bias and to position the researcher in relation to the study (Kleinman & Kolb, 2011; Mahadevan, 2011).

If human knowledge is co-constructed, then any research project must involve some degree of mutual exploration and discovery. The unmet challenge for qualitative researchers is to document this process in an open and transparent way. (Walsh, 1996, p. 383)

A qualitative researcher's stance is tentative, to enable responsiveness to the data, accurately reflect participants' comments and pragmatically address conditions of access to the data where required (Lambotte & Meunier, 2013; Whiteley, 2004). To achieve this tentative stance and flexibility while ensuring research rigour, an audit trail and field notes were maintained throughout the study, disclosing choices and ensuring that the research process was explicit and open to scrutiny for credibility and reproducibility purposes (Ahern, 1999; Pieters & Dornig, 2013). The other practice that was helpful was to have a peer doctoral student and doctoral supervisors to challenge the researcher's analytical thinking in coding and analysis (Pieters & Dornig, 2013; Schrieber, 2001).

[T]his intellectual struggle in the presence of a supportive other allowed space for creative, deep work and increased individual scholarly confidence. (Pieters & Dornig, 2013, p. 207).

The audit trail chronicles the researcher's reflexivity practices and includes interview field notes, critical peer discussions between the researcher and doctoral supervisors, research procedure and data analysis decisions. An excerpt of the audit trail is included in this thesis.

It is noted that Alvesson (2003) cautions against extreme reflexivity, advocating for interviews to be interpreted using 'pragmatic reflexivity'. This involves the researcher analysing and working for meaning within the data and exercising reflexivity, while

recognising research to be a finite activity and resist ‘disappearing down the rabbit hole’ of continual questioning. As Glaser (2002a) notes, grounded theory does not require a theory describing the totality, just a core process, and thus if variables such as demographics do not emerge from the data as salient issues, they do not require the grounded researcher to pursue for analytical treatment.

Table 3.3 lists issues of rigour, categorised by type of issue: credibility, transferability and confirmability of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), worthy topic, meaningful coherence of research (Tracy, 2010), as well as ethical and project risk issues specific to this study. Mitigations were identified for each risk issue to minimise potential adverse effects by reducing the likeliness of the cause occurring (‘ex ante’ mitigations), and/or by limiting the effect of the consequence (Kloman, 1990; Lewis, 2003).

Table 3.3 Identification of this study's rigour, ethical and project risks: Causes, consequences and mitigations

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Identify research issue	Research may not exist or may not have practical value, leading to waste of time of those involved and university resources	Worthy topic	Insufficient critical literature review or understanding of trust and local government contexts to accurately identify gap in academic knowledge	<p>Waste of resources (opportunity cost)</p> <p>Potential negative reputational impact on researcher, doctoral supervisors and university</p>	<p>Experienced and qualified doctoral supervisors, and one of the doctoral supervisors for this study has knowledge of the field</p> <p>Presentation to PhD candidacy board, including critical literature review and justification of practical value</p> <p>Researcher's knowledge of local government and network to ascertain the practical value of the research, recognising limitations of familiarity</p>
Identify ethical issues	Ethical concerns not adequately addressed before research commenced, which may lead to reputational impacts upon current and future research	Ethical	Researcher relatively inexperienced	<p>Research halted if severe ethical breach</p> <p>Negative reputational impact on researcher, doctoral supervisors and university</p> <p>Potential research participants less willing to participate in future research</p>	<p>Experienced and qualified doctoral supervisors</p> <p>Independent ethics approval by the University Ethics Board</p>

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Arranging research to be conducted in the organisation	Lack of shared understanding between researcher and organisation that the research was conducted in relation to participant confidentiality may lead the organisation to agreeing to research with expectation that confidential information will be provided	Ethical	Misunderstanding	<p>Researcher may be pressured to provide confidential information</p> <p>Reduced credibility for future requests for research in the organisation</p>	<p>A written letter to the CEO requesting access to organisation and the researcher's verbal presentation to management staff at the organisation made this explicit, and the organisation's acceptance</p> <p>Written information given to participants in the form of the informed consent letter, stating confidentiality, was given to the organisation prior to commencing research</p> <p>Research activities designed to protect identity of participants, such as removing names and job titles in interview transcripts</p>
Arranging access to an organisation and research writing	The context of the research is unique or the description of the context is insufficient, which may limit transferability of study results	Transferability	<p>A unique context of where and/or when the research was undertaken limits transferability</p> <p>The reader is unable to ascertain transferability</p>	Limited practical application of research findings	<p>Researcher described the organisation and context as much as could be while still honouring confidentiality so readers can ascertain transferability</p> <p>'Grounded research' (Whiteley, 2004) provides level of 'groundedness' for emergent categories; well grounded issues are more likely than less grounded issues to be transferable between similar organisations. The similarity of context may contain such features as local government, containing blue- and white-collar workers, multiple work sites</p>

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Develop interview questions	Interview questions not clear for all demographics to be interviewed which may lead to poorer quality data from interviews	Credibility and dependability	Researcher relatively inexperienced with blue-collar group in the research context	Interviewee confused by questions and unable to provide quality data in relation to research question	Familiarisation study conducted with blue-collar workers to improve clarity of interview questions for this group Advice/support of the doctoral supervisor who is experienced in researching blue- and white-collar workers
Data collection	As the interviewer is the research 'tool', there is dependence upon the researcher's effectiveness of researching in interviewing techniques	Credibility	Relative inexperience of the researcher in an academic study, and with blue-collar workers in the research context	Poorer quality data	Training: the researcher successfully completed an Advanced Qualitative Research course Doctoral supervisor reviewed randomly selected and listened to interview audio to provide feedback on technique Researcher reflexively journalled throughout the research to improve interview techniques
Data collection	Researcher 'goes native', leading to poorer data as researcher loses detached interest in participant and reduced focus on research question (Bryman, 1988)	Credibility and dependability	Researcher relatively inexperienced in academic research process Researcher identifies too closely with participants	Waste of researcher and supervisors time and university resources (opportunity cost) Poorer quality thesis and emergent theory	Conducted data analysis concurrently to data collection, anchoring the researcher to the study Reflexive journalling throughout the study to be sensitive to this risk being realised Critical conversations with peer doctoral candidate and doctoral supervisors

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Data collection	Insufficient numbers of participants (interviewees) volunteer to take part in the research	Project risk	<p>The organisation's approval to conduct research is withdrawn</p> <p>Willing participants are not able to pre-book an hour out of their work to be interviewed</p> <p><i>(This cause was identified during the data collection and particularly relates to blue-collar and casual staff)</i></p>	<p>The research unable to be completed</p> <p>Waste of resources (opportunity cost) if the study is only partly completed</p>	<p>The written letter to the CEO requesting access to organisation and the researcher's verbal presentation to management staff at the organisation made the research process (costs, benefits, confidentiality of individual participant responses) explicit prior to commencement of the study to minimise likelihood of the organisation withdrawing consent to conduct the research</p> <p>The researcher utilised multiple methods to promote the research to potential participants (posters, email, attending team meetings, researcher availability to respond to questions and direct approaches from the researcher to potentially data-rich participants)</p>
Data collection	Asking participants about their negative trust experience at the organisation may lead to participant distress	Ethical	Interview question relating to negative trust experience/s	<p>Participants experience negative emotional response</p> <p>Participating organisation withdraws consent for staff to be involved</p>	<p>Empowered participants: prior to commencement of an interview, the researcher offered that the recording could be stopped if the participant wished, showed the stop button and placed recorder by the participant, and reminded that consent could be withdrawn at any time, even after the interview if the participant wished</p> <p>Researcher sensitivity to participants' emotional state</p> <p>If participant distress occurred, the researcher offered to pause or discontinue discussing a particular issue (Corbin & Morse, 2003; Cowles, 1988; Liamputtong, 2007)</p>

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Data collection	The potential participant may not understand the conditions of participating (e.g. the risks, the voluntary nature) which leads to negative affect for participant during/post interview	Ethical	Potential participant is illiterate	Compromised ability to provide informed consent	Potential participants who were illiterate were excluded from the study. (This was included in the ethics application.)
Interview transcription	The interview recording and verbatim documents (prior to removal of identifying statements) are obtained by an individual other than researcher or doctoral supervisor which leads to lack of confidentiality/anonymity for participant/s	Ethical	Identifying detail overlooked by research in transcript Audio/relevant documents not kept under secure conditions	Breach of informed consent Potential negative consequences (emotional distress/retribution within workplace) for participants Potential negative reputational impact on researcher, doctoral supervisors and university Potential research participants less willing to participate in future research as a result of the event	Audio downloaded to computer and removed from digital recorder to prevent audio from being played inadvertently when setting up audio device for subsequent interviews For those interviews transcribed by a transcribing service, the researcher obtained (1) a guarantee of confidentiality, and (2) requested the audio and transcription were deleted after the researcher confirmed receipt of the transcription Written transcript of interviews removed names, job titles and wherever possible, specifics of tasks discussed by participants Signed informed consent forms kept in a locked safe Password protection activated and cloud disabled on the computer storing interview audio files and written transcripts

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Interview transcription	Interviews incorrectly transcribed, which may lead to poorer/incorrect theory generation	Dependability	<p>Transcribing error</p> <p>External noise affecting quality of audio recording</p> <p><i>(This cause was identified during the data collection in relation to interviews held at parks and coffee shops)</i></p>	<p>Organisation takes action to improve trust based upon incorrect theory, wasting resources and having little negative impact on trust in the organisation</p> <p>Potential negative reputational impact on researcher, doctoral supervisors and university</p> <p>Research participants may be less willing to participate in future research</p>	<p>Researcher checked potential sites prior to an interview for external noise</p> <p>Researcher constructed a dense foam ‘container’ for digital recorder to minimise wind noise</p> <p>The primary doctoral supervisor randomly selected interview recordings and audited the transcripts against the audio recording to provide an inter-rater reliability check for transcription accuracy (Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012)</p>
Data analysis	Analysis of codes may not be supported by members (participants) other than the researcher, or poor coding of transcribed interviews, which may lead to poorer or incorrect theory generation	<p>Confirmability; <i>‘establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data’ (Tobin & Begley, 2004, p. 392)</i></p> <p>Dependability</p>	Researcher relatively inexperienced in academic research process	<p>Organisation/future researchers takes action based upon incorrect theory, wasting resources and ineffective in achieving desired impact on trust</p> <p>Potential negative reputational impact on researcher, doctoral supervisors and university</p> <p>Research participants in this study may be less willing to participate in future research</p>	<p>Researcher tested interpretations of data with Doctoral Supervisors and a peer doctoral candidate (Ahern, 1999; Pieters & Dornig, 2013)</p> <p>The primary Doctoral Supervisor randomly selected data and associated coding and categories for inter-rater reliability check of coding (Münscher & Kühlmann, 2012)</p> <p>Researcher conscious to remain theoretically sensitive, so the tentative model generated from this study ‘theoretically informed, but not theoretically pre-formed’ (Charmaz, 2007, p. 80)</p> <p>Transparency of analysis by showing all codes and the respective sub-categories, categories and concepts in the ‘Findings’ (Chapter 4) of this thesis so the reader may ascertain confirmability</p>

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Whole of study	The researcher and/or doctoral supervisor is unable to continue this research, leading to delay or not completing the research	Project risk	<p>Doctoral supervisor unable to continue being supervisor</p> <p>Researcher unable to commit sufficient blocks of time</p>	<p>Research not completed</p> <p>Wasted resources if research abandoned</p>	<p>Two supervisors involved (the primary supervisor remained throughout the study)</p> <p>Project plan was adhered to, with annual check via the university progress report mechanism. This annual report from researcher and doctoral supervisor to university Higher Degree by Research (HDR) unit, results in HDR judgement of 'good standing' or 'conditional' (This thesis was 'good standing' throughout)</p>
Whole of study	Insufficient depth or coverage in the research documentation may lead to a lack of coherence for the reader	Dependability (coherence of research)	Poor or unclear 'intrinsic/internal logic' in the research or writings (Koch & Harrington, 1998, p. 887)	<p>Reader uncertainty regarding the dependability of the findings and/or tentative trust model generated by the study</p> <p>The findings of the study are not used in academic or practical sense</p>	<p>An audit trail kept throughout each step in the research procedure, which documented issues and research decisions to aid coherence while allowing for change prompted by the context of the study</p> <p>The systematic procedures of grounded theory support logic and coherence, specifically the code-recode procedure as well as constant comparison of sub-categories and categories, returning again and again to check and relocate if necessary</p> <p>Quality checks:</p> <p>Doctoral supervisors are experienced as supervisors and researchers, and doctoral supervisor knowledge of the field</p> <p>Non-academic editor employed for grammatical check</p> <p>Thesis subjected to examination by two external examiners</p>

Process step	Risk statement	Issue type	Cause	Consequence	Mitigations to address
Data collection and then ongoing	Research design places the researcher in potentially vulnerable situations which may lead to physical and/or psychological impact to researcher (Alvesson, 2003; Emerald & Carpenter, 2015; Lo, 2014)	Ethical	<p>Physical harm to the researcher:</p> <p>Working in isolation – the researcher interviewing participants (one-to-one) in a location suggested by participant</p> <p>Psychological harm:</p> <p>Emotional intensity and empathetic engagement in one-to-one interviews and asking participants to detail experiences and feelings of vulnerability and emotional intensity (Emerald & Carpenter, 2015), including reinforcement by repetitively working with audio recording and in vivo data</p> <p>Need for researcher's emotions to be engaged for better quality research (e.g. potentially identifying own bias through emotive reaction, data collection/'emotionally sensed knowledge' (Emerald & Carpenter, 2015, p. 748)</p>	<p>Physical or psychological harm to researcher:</p> <p>Lengthened time to complete study if researcher delays re-engaging in data (interview transcription and verification) (Emerald & Carpenter, 2015)</p>	<p>Physical harm to the researcher:</p> <p>Researcher scoped the interview site suggested by the participant prior to interview for appropriateness and safety concerns</p> <p>For those interviews being conducted in a park, the researcher supplied a third party with the details of location and expected time back</p> <p>Psychological impact:</p> <p>Advice sought from the literature and doctoral supervisors on potential issues inherent in data collection (interviewing)</p> <p>Debriefs via reflexive journalling and with doctoral supervisor</p> <p>Emotional support from family, friends and academic colleagues (Jairam & Kahl, 2012)</p> <p>Researcher belief that this research may facilitate greater understanding of this issue and actions/behaviours/systems which support higher trust within workplaces</p> <p>Researcher alert to her own wellbeing and maintained a balance of non-research time and activities</p>

3.12 Audit Trail

3.12.1 Decisions and changes to research design or interview protocol

#	Event causing change, and issue requiring change	Changes made
	Re: Interview questions and interview protocol	
1.	<p>Instigating event: The familiarisation study with local government blue-collar workers</p> <p>Issue: Refining interview questions for blue-collar context, to enhance understanding and acceptability of research questions</p>	<p>a. Add a preface to each group of questions explaining who the parties are and the direction of the trust. For example, for the interview question ‘These first questions are about your supervisor’s trust in you’, a hand gesture to indicate the direction of trust was added.</p> <p>b. Replace ‘What do you think your supervisor <i>observes about</i> you (how you act for example, or the work you complete) ...’ with: ‘What do you think your supervisor <i>sees in</i> you (how you act for example, or the work you complete) ...’. This is because ‘sees’ is broader than ‘observes’; the latter being restricted to visual observation, whereas ‘sees’ is closer to ‘perceives’, however more readily understood than ‘perceives’.</p> <p>c. Replace ‘What is the worst story about trust <i>in the</i> organisation?’ with ‘What is the worst story about trust <i>within this</i> organisation?’ as a participant in the familiarisation study responded to the original question about an incident in her previous organisation.</p> <p>d. Replace ‘What do you think your staff see that <i>would bolster their trust</i> in you’ with ‘What do you think your staff observe about your actions or work that <i>increases their level of trust</i> in you ...’</p>

<p>2. Instigating event: The researcher realised that providing her full name as she asked the receptionist to advise the relevant staff member (the research participant) that the researcher (name given, not role of researcher) had arrived may compromise participant confidentiality.</p> <p>Issue: Supporting participant confidentiality</p>	<p>Subsequently, the researcher only provided her first name at front desk.</p>
<p>3. Instigating event: Thumps/bumps to the table the recorder was resting on (from participant thumping table with fist to emphasise a point and participant swinging her leg) transmitted loud noise to the recorder</p> <p>Issue: Noise obscured the audio recording of the interview</p>	<p>The researcher obtained a thick material case usually used for glasses, to lay the recorder upon when in an interview, and stored the recorder in when not in use. The material successfully softened the audio effect of knocks to the table.</p>
<p>4. Instigating event: After the interview concluded, the researcher switched the recorder switched off and commenced packing away. The participant and researcher engaged in small talk, then the participant added further information pertinent to the research question.</p> <p>Issue: Potential to miss rich data</p>	<p>In accordance with interview protocol the additional information from this interview was captured through field notes immediately after the interview. However, to prevent a recurrence of this situation, for subsequent interviews the researcher did not turn the recorder off until everything else was packed away and researcher and participant were departing.</p>
<p>5. Instigating event: An interviewee (blue-collar worker) was puzzled when the researcher asked for ‘worst story about trust’ and wanted to know if this meant example.</p> <p>Issue: Refining interview questions for blue-collar context, to enhance understanding and acceptability of research questions</p>	<p>The wording pertaining to the critical incident questions were changed to add the words ‘or example’. (e.g. ‘What is the worst story <i>or example</i> of trust...’)</p>
<p>6. Instigating event: The initial interviews were not generating any data on research objective 3, and participants were puzzled regarding how to respond to related interview questions</p> <p>Issue: Change made to research objective 3 (RO3)</p>	<p>In its original form, RO3 was: ‘Identify how trust between supervisors and subordinates are perceived to be affected by elements of organisational structure’. Related interview questions had not elicited any data; rather responses indicated that organisational structures were privately set aside in the supervisor–subordinate relationship where possible. For example, one participant described that due to a long-term medical condition, when the subordinate was unable to work, there was an implicit agreement between the</p>

	<p>supervisor and team-mates that they would ‘step up’ and cover the work and the absence.</p> <p>In addition, the supervisor was perceived as holding limited power in relation to in relation to organisational structures in comparison to individuals in upper management, as illustrated in the following quotation:</p> <p><i>I guess I look at [my supervisor's] role, there are some times he's got certain powers to make decisions on things based on considerations that probably go beyond how I might view things. [However, as] example, I mentioned infringements [fines given to residents / customers]... it's only done by Directors, withdrawing infringement[s]. (Participant # 47)</i></p> <p>Hence, the decision was made to widen RO3 from trust between ‘supervisors and subordinates’ to trust ‘between staff’.</p> <p>Decroup (2000) supports revision to the research problem in qualitative research in response to the data.</p>
7	<p>Instigating event: Reflexivity during interview</p> <p>Issue: An interviewee had a very positive and solid relationship with her supervisor, so with the questions relating to extreme negative occurrences (when distrusted, worst experience relating to trust), it appeared that the interviewee was uncomfortable, as if answering would be disloyal to her supervisor.</p> <p>Change to interview protocol: At the commencement of interviews, the researcher explained the format and purpose for asking ‘best’ and ‘worst’ questions to the participant.</p> <p>Amended interview question from:</p> <p><i>‘What do you think may lead to your supervisor to distrust, or question her trust in you?’</i>, with:</p> <p><i>‘Has there been anything that you have done or failed to do, that has lowered your supervisor’s level of trust in you?’ Follow up questions;</i></p> <p><i>If yes: please tell me about this.</i></p> <p><i>If no: Okay then, based on your knowledge of your supervisor – what would one of the team need to do that would lower your supervisor’s trust in that staff member?’</i></p> <p>This still aligns (and perhaps more successfully) with the research question on perceived factors of trust.</p>
8	<p>Instigating event: Reflexivity during interview</p> <p>Amended the interview question ‘Can you describe any <i>challenges</i> around</p>

	<p>power or control that make trust easy or difficult in the organisation’ to ‘Can you describe any <i>issues</i> ...’ as ‘challenges’ has a negative implication, whereas ‘issues’ is more neutral.</p>
<p>9 Instigating event: The challenge of classifying participants as either a blue-collar or white-collar employee</p> <p>Issue: A research need to correctly identify participants to facilitate a comparison between white- and blue-collar responses</p>	<p>After consideration of several ways that participants could be classified for the purpose of this study, the distinction of whether a participant is ‘blue-collar’ or ‘white-collar’ was based upon whether a participant has a landline work telephone, as indicated by the telephone number for the participant on the organisational chart. This method was chosen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pragmatically for how distinct this division is between employees that had a dedicated landline telephone and those that did not; • From a hesitation in asking participants to self-identify as blue- or white-collar, due to the potential for perceived class implications, so may have been counter to rapport building between researcher and participant; and • By comparing the organisational chart, drawing upon the researcher’s experience in local government, and the interviewees’ descriptions regarding what their usual day involved, this solution provided a simpler and accurate way to determine for each participant whether they are ‘on the tools’ (blue-collar) or office based (white-collar), although library staff were the exception as more cognitive work, yet without necessarily having a dedicated landline phone number per library employee.
<p>10 Instigating event: Reflexivity during interview</p> <p>Issue: ‘How do you think the organisation, the way it is set up, or its systems, helps trust build up between staff?’ refers to organisational structure; however, it is very broad and participants appear uncomfortable with, and have difficulty in providing a response to this question.</p>	<p>The organisational structure categories from the literature and listed in the researcher’s candidacy was typed (16 font, for ease of reading for participants) and laminated (for longevity) and handed to the interviewees when asking this question. This handout listing of what ‘organisational structure’ encompassed appeared to work well as prompts for the different issues. Some participants systematically responded to each item on the list, and others just picked out the pertinent issues for them. Either way, this provided higher quality data in response to this question and participants appeared to be more relaxed than previously when responding to this question.</p>

Re: Sampling and participant recruitment

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| <p>11. Instigating event: The familiarisation study with local government blue-collar workers</p> <p>Issue: Need for an effective means to promote blue-collar employee trust in the research process and researcher</p> | <p>Verbally reiterate the written assertion in the poster promoting the research and the informed consent form at team meetings promoting participation and prior to commencement of each interview. The verbal reiteration was: 'You will not be personally identified. All responses are de-identified and merged as this research is interested in finding the repeated patterns and themes.'</p> |
| <p>12. Instigating event: An opportunity to interview two directors in the organisation and a regular volunteer to the organisation</p> <p>Issue: Modification to initial research design</p> | <p>Interview these additional participants. A short rationale and modified research design has been included in the 'Methodology' section.</p> |
| <p>13. Instigating event: Insufficient participants for the research, particularly blue-collar participants.</p> <p>Issue: Need to widen the recruitment strategies</p> | <p>a. Requested and received permission from CEO to send an email to all staff in the organisation. (Note though that this did not appear to elicit any more participants; however, it may in part have been due to a higher percentage employees being on annual leave, given that the email was sent in early January.)</p> <p>b. Requested and received permission to have a desk at the depot for five weeks to facilitate promotion to staff to participate in the research and so this researcher was available to conduct interviews on ad-hoc basis as participant's schedules opened up. This was a very successful action to recruit participants from the depot, particularly blue-collar participants.</p> |

Re: Decision to treat the organisation's hierarchical structure (and implications of the inherent power/control) as a 'quasi fact'

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| <p>14. Instigating event: Consistent references made in interviews referring to the organisational hierarchy and the inherent organisational structures (particularly information sharing, and power/control over staff)</p> <p>Issue: Given the prominence and consistency of organisational hierarchy in the data, there is need to consider as this a 'quasi fact'</p> | <p>Although 'facts' sit uneasily with interpretivist research, as a 'socially stable construct', the hierarchical structure was treated as a 'quasi fact', as permitted by grounded research procedures (Whiteley, 2004). This determination was not achieved lightly and was discussed with this researcher's doctoral supervisor.</p> |
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3.12.2 Introduction to this researcher's reflexive journal

As the original reflexive journal was made in a diary format, this section of the thesis breaks from the format of the rest of the thesis, being presented in the first-person voice and in the present tense, conveying the authentic voice of the doctoral candidate's journalling. However, although the journal was written chronologically, as data analysis and collection occurred concurrently according to grounded research procedure, presenting the diary notes in their original chronological order harmed readability, and so journal notes have been grouped by theme.

Excerpts from the reflexive journal were selected for inclusion in the thesis for transparency regarding the challenges experienced in this study and the challenges the researcher personally experienced on the journey from novice to more experienced interviewer and researcher. These criteria were chosen as they reflect the rationale for such a journal as identified by academics:

1. Understanding that the researcher is the tool by which data are collected and analysed, it is vital for the researcher to be active in critical thinking and self-awareness of one's own assumptions held regarding the topic, socioeconomic status, as well as strengths and shortcoming that may influence the research (Ahern, 1999; McLachlan & Garcia, 2015; Morse, 2015; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012; Tracy, 2010). Chenail (2011) refers to reflexive journalling undertaken with this aim as 'interviewing the interviewer' (p. 255).
2. Providing transparency to support critique and replication and for readers to 'locate' the researcher within the study (Pieters & Dornig, 2013; Tracy, 2010). 'Sincere researchers ... consider not only their own needs but also those of their participants, readers, coauthors and potential audiences' (Tracy, 2010, p. 842).
3. The reflexive journal leverages the learning experience through meta-cognition (McLachlan & Garcia, 2015).

Logistically, the way in which this researcher undertook reflexive journalling followed Chenail's (2011) advice to write down thoughts following each interview, so that either in the writing or later reading of these notes, unrecognised bias may be revealed. This researcher also made notes when emotion was experienced during the study, as surprise, disappointment, embarrassment, feeling a sense of belonging or feeling

excluded – all of which were felt during this research – required further self-exploration. These ‘emotional markers’ were used to mitigate potential researcher bias and also to identify data of interest which could then direct further data collection, thereby supporting theoretical sampling (Boeije, 2012; Coyne, 1997; Patton, 1990; Yin, 2011).

3.12.2.1 Excerpts from reflexive journal (includes field notes)

3.12.2.1.1 Theme: Interviewing protocol and techniques

1. Field note after first interview: A few times I held back the urge to give advice/make suggestions to the participant, as it was clear that the participant felt thwarted in the workplace and did not know why. This may reflect the role I have in my workplace within organisational development; however, I recognised this as inappropriate in my present role as a researcher. However, restraining these inclinations became easier over the course of the interview.
2. It is challenging when an interviewee does not directly answer questions throughout the interview, but slightly aside to what was asked, rather like the participant is ‘trotting out’ something she has said many times in the past. I have found a useful interviewing response to pause and ask something like, ‘So, help me understand how that relates to trust’. The response tends to reveal whether the participant’s thoughts have taken a tangent to the subject at hand (trust) and this question re-focusses the interview back to this, or the participant reveals the link that was obscure to me.
3. As wind gusts had obscured some of the talk on a previous audio, I had researched wind reduction devices for digital recorders, but unfortunately did not find any specific to my device. However, I found a website where someone had researched what materials work best to make a home-made wind reducer, which was foam sponge. I bought six different types of foam sponges, although received a very odd look from the store cashier! As there was no wind, I conducted an experiment wrapping the recorder in no material (as the control), and then the different types of foams/materials, holding the device out of the car window (while I was a passenger in a moving vehicle) and reciting ‘Mary had a little lamb’ for each and listening to the result. At 60km/hour, no material worked; however, at 20km/hour, the densest foam provided the clearest audio. I used this new device at the next interview in

the park, and even though it was a windy day, there was no obscuring of audio from air movement. Success!

4. Today's interview did not flow easily. This may be due to the time (late afternoon) combined with an early start in my day, so I may have not have been as alert during the interview as other interviews. Another potential factor was that the interviewee was less conversational and had a statement-type manner of talking, which I can find more challenging holding a discussion, but I will have to work out how best to do this. The interview just left me flat and was finished in 45 minutes versus the average hour taken so far. However, upon listening to the audio, the responses to questions were direct and provided useful data, demonstrating that how I feel is not necessarily coupled to the quality of the data. This also highlights the mental concentration required to conduct an interview, to be simultaneously viewing from the balcony (taking a higher-level view) and 'on the dance floor' (ensuring individual questions are answered fully, following up with probing questions where required and so forth). I have resolved to ensure I am well rested prior to interviewing and will pay less attention to how I emotionally 'feel' about an interview as a gauge of the success of an interview in eliciting data.
5. The participant became teary in the interview (discussing a period when she felt distrusted and vulnerable). I believe I handled it delicately and with compassion. The interview protocol worked well; I said to take her time, asked whether would like a drink of water and offered to take a break. The participant wanted to press on (I think to have distraction) and so I skipped the next question as it related to distrust and went to a positive trust question. The interview continued and the participant recovered composure. At the end of the interview, the participant said that she felt a moment of regret that maybe she said too much. I reiterated to the participant that consent could be withdrawn any time, even after the interview. The participant indicated that it was fine. While not wishing to distress participants, I am also hopeful that this may mean I am getting deep, rich data. This interview highlighted the challenge of showing compassion; this study involves taking people through potentially emotional memories, and as the researcher I have a responsibility not to induce psychological harm. These reflections after such an event feel calculating and uncaring; however, I press on despite my discomfort, as this will help my journey from novice to experienced researcher, and support me if a similar situation arises again.

6. I am feeling very comfortable with the questions and process of interviews now, and consider that I now have a good, measured pace with my questions and speech.
7. Also, reading transcripts of the interviews has encouraged me to compose spontaneous questions more thoughtfully now (not so many false starts). I appreciate and believe I conduct semi-structured interviews fairly well, delving where I need to, or where I cannot see the connection between what the participant is saying and trust, trying to draw it back to trust by asking the participant what the connection is. My professional background in process improvement has likely honed my skills in these types of conversations. However, I have also realised that I say 'good', 'excellent', as encouragement at the end of a response before posing another question. The concern is that this could be subtly directing an interviewee, so am being more conscious to use 'non-judgemental' responses.
8. This interview took a bit less than an hour; however, it felt productive and I enjoyed it. Perhaps I just enjoy those interviews where I like the person? However, I recall reading that the researcher's enjoyment of an interview does not necessarily correlate with depth and usefulness of data and take my earlier experience where I did not enjoy the interview and yet it provided useful data. The semi-structured nature of the interview gives me confidence that the interview still has structure and the required questions are asked, which ensures I do not relax too much into an enjoyable interview to the detriment of data collection.
9. I was welcomed to the organisation's depot, starting my five weeks here to be more on hand for people to participate in interviews. I was advised that I am to work in the directors office so I can conduct the interviews there too as the director is on leave. Not having to book an interview room sounds good; however, will this environment affect the interviews? Also, I will not be around people if I am tucked away in an office, which may be detrimental to getting interviews. Because of my concerns, I have arranged instead to work at a vacant desk in an open plan area of the depot building.
10. I am interested in the analysis to see if there are any differences between blue- and white-collar workers as there is no research been conducted, as far as my literature review to date has revealed, on trust for blue-collar workers, which was part of the research gap to be address by this study.
11. However, now that I am located at the depot, I have realised by observing the people who work here that it is not going to be as easy as I thought to identify

interviewees as blue- or white-collar. For example, staff managing infrastructure projects wear high visibility vests, are out on site, but are primarily office based. For example, asset surveyors are in field, but also work on computer. The potential ways that may guide classification of participants as blue- or white-collar workers are:

- a. Percentage of time in office versus time in the field
- b. Asking participant to self-identify
- c. Tools used the most (computer versus trucks / mowers / graders)
- d. Type of qualifications

Updates on this issue made at two later dates:

- i. [Relates to (a): Percentage of time in office versus field time]. I asked this participant what percentage of time she spent in the field versus office; the answer was 50 per cent. So, the portion of time spent in the office or field seems too arbitrary to determine whether the participant is a blue-collar worker or not.
- ii. Going over the organisational structure chart today, it occurs to me that there is another indicator if a staff member is a blue-collar worker; the internal phone number extension is '0' (indicating they are not based at a desk). I believe this will be a reasonable and practical indicator to use.

3.12.2.1.2 Theme: Participant recruitment

1. An interviewee admitted volunteering to participate in the study only after seeing me at her team meeting as she felt more comfortable in trusting me from this, rather than just from posters promoting participation. This highlights the necessity to attend team meetings.
2. An interviewee shed light on why I have only been getting coordinator level people and up (in general) volunteering for interviews – the study was only raised at the coordinator meeting. The interviewee recommended getting invited to toolboxes for depot staff.
3. From information revealed in an interview, I have realised why getting invited to toolbox meetings to recruit participants is proving to be difficult. The blue-collar participant said toolboxes are only called when things are going or have gone wrong, and staff only find out the day before a toolbox is being held. I may need to re-think my strategy for getting in front of blue-collar staff to promote participating in the research.

4. I assumed that being based at the organisation would help increase potential participant's trust in me prior to the interview as through informal discourse they could gain knowledge of the way I operate and my motivation for this study. However, it may have also increased the level of trust required from potential participants; people also now need to trust me to not betray their casual conversations in the workplace, e.g. to management.

3.12.2.1.3 Theme: Critical thinking and self-awareness of one's own assumptions, emotions and potential biases

1. I have arranged access to sit at a desk at the depot to elicit more blue-collar worker interviews. I need to wear steel capped enclosed shoes and high visibility vest. I am oddly pleased at this – it feels like people garbed in this clothing are a 'tribe' from which I have previously been excluded. I find it interesting that simply by dressing a particular way can shift one's sense of being an 'outsider' or being acceptable to a group.
2. I conducted three interviews [at the depot] today – none had been booked, so this reinforces the advantage of working at the site so I am available for ad hoc interviews.
3. I have added to the 'Rigour/risk' section (Table 3.3) that willing blue-collar participants are not free to pre-book an hour off, but can take an hour on an ad hoc basis as opportunity presents itself. The mitigation for this is to do what I am already doing ... making myself available so that when the opportunity presents itself for the participant, they can let me know that they can spare an hour.
4. I was beginning to suspect that the blue-collar workers were reluctant to participate; however, I see that I did not even see my (wrong) assumption that a blue-collar local government employee would not be able to pre-schedule an interview, given that the organisation had approved interviews occurring on work time. As a white-collar local government employee, I can generally determine my work day; however, I now realise that blue-collar workers are constrained by their work. This same issue has come up in interviews, with white-collar workers making assumptions about colleague out-station or blue-collar workers' availability, then drawing negative conclusions regarding the colleague's willingness to be involved when participation fails to meet expectations. I am disappointed and embarrassed that I have followed this pattern too, but glad to have realised this erroneous assumption and constantly vigilant for further assumptions.

5. Today a third person who I had interviewed around a year ago introduced herself to me, not remembering we had met previously. It feels so asymmetrical. I have felt that the participants to date have revealed their inner thoughts to me and I have listened to their audio meticulously and in some sections, repeatedly, and have worked intimately with their words from the transcript so have a deep sense of their cadence and mannerisms. I feel an intimate connection with the participants, yet some do not recall me or remember that they had been interviewed. This is understandable, upon reflection; however, it was, nevertheless, a surprise to me at the time.
6. A few times now with working at the depot, I have been called to 'bear witness' in a jocular way. An event will occur, such as staff affectionately mocking each other or accidentally bumping another in passing in a hallway, and then it is called out 'Tracey, did you hear/see that?' It is oddly inclusive yet exclusive ... including me in the banter, however reinforcing my sense of being apart, the observer.
7. An advantage of being situated at the depot is that I am required to wear the personal protection equipment (PPE); namely, high visibility vest, steel capped shoes (and thus, am wearing jeans as these items seem at odds with wearing more formal clothes). Wearing the same type of clothing as the blue-collar workers feels like I am on an even field with the workers and I believe supports building of trust between myself and the blue-collar research participants. However, if I was not stationed for full days at the depot, I would have been making appointments during my work day using flexi-time, which would have meant either turning up in my white-collar worker office clothes, or changing into PPE prior to the interview. I feel neither option would have supported rapport between researcher and participant. The former might create a barrier to rapport for the participant, and the latter would feel manipulative and inauthentic, and so may have created a barrier to rapport from my behalf.

3.13 Summary

This chapter has provided transparency for the research methodology, discussing the philosophy, theoretical perspectives, ontology, epistemology, methodology and research design selected for this study, and illustrating the strength of the connection between all elements of the research. The assumptions inherent to these aspects were

made explicit, as well as this study's limitations, rigour and ethical concerns. Excerpts of the audit trail, including all research decisions were laid bare, allowing the reader to assess the rigour issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Chapter 4. Findings

4.1 Introduction

This study identified an under-represented and important issue, namely interpersonal trust within a local government context. The researcher familiarised herself with pertinent literature which confirmed the importance of trust in organisations and the attendant problems researchers reported. An appropriate epistemology – interpretive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln et al., 2011) – and methodology – qualitative (Boeije, 2012; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Lofland et al., 2006; Yin, 2011) – were selected, culminating in the research design and methodology presented in Chapter 3. The literature, together with a familiarising study, informed the research questions and objectives presented below.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. *What are the perceived factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?*
2. *What are the received (actual) factors of trust between a subordinate and supervisor?*
3. *What aspects of organisational structure are perceived to affect trust between a subordinate and a supervisor?*

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Research objectives regarding subordinate trust in their direct supervisor (upward trust)

- RO1a: *Elicit the supervisor behaviours that a subordinate identifies as affecting trust in her supervisor*
- RO1b: *Elicit the behaviours that a supervisor perceives to affect a subordinate's trust in herself*
- RO1c: *Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO1a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO1b)*

2. Research objectives regarding supervisor trust in their direct subordinate (downward trust)

- RO2a: *Elicit the subordinate behaviours that a supervisor identifies as affecting trust in her subordinate*
- RO2b: *Elicit the behaviours that a subordinate perceives to affect a supervisor's trust in herself*
- RO2c: *Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO2a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO2b)*

3. Research objective regarding organisational structure

- RO3: *Identify how trust between a subordinate and supervisor is perceived to be affected by elements of organisational structure*

This chapter is organised in the following way.

1. An explanation of logistic process of this data analysis and terms used
2. Results of findings of research objective 1 (upward trust)
3. Results of findings of research objective 2 (downward trust)
4. Results of findings of research objective 3 (factors of organisational structure that impact trust between staff within the organisation)

The findings sections commence with the interview questions used to elicit data for the research objective. The researcher allowed for emerging questions in the form of insights from participants outside of the formal questions.

Next presented is a summary table of the groundedness and demographics associated with each category and sub-category. ‘Groundedness’, which is sometimes referred to as ‘empirical groundedness’ (Lo, 2014, p. 69) is the term for how well a grouping is supported (Alvira-Hammond, 2012; van Wietmarschen, 2013). In this study therefore, ‘groundedness’ refers to the quantity of data (number of codes) associated with the relevant concepts, categories and sub-categories.

Following this, a more detailed discussion of each category and sub-category is provided, including representative codes. As well, any demographic under/over-representation in the codes is noted. This is followed by a high-level relationship map displaying the concepts, categories and sub-categories that arose from the data. Within the high-level relationship map, the density of concepts, categories and sub-categories, which is the number of links between these groups (Alvira-Hammond, 2012) is visually displayed.

4.2 Process of Analysis

ATLAS.ti was selected as appropriate ethnographic software to manage and support data analysis (Aldoney & Cabrera, 2016; Calarco, 2011; LaRossa, 2005; Manning et al., 2010). The software facilitates systematic data analysis and constant comparison, and through the display of visual networks, can stimulate critical thinking and exploration of tentative relationships (Alvira-Hammond, 2012; Friese, 2014).

A hermeneutic unit is a term used by the ATLAS.ti software, and sometimes referred to a ‘project’ or ‘project container’ (Alvira-Hammond, 2012). The hermeneutic unit is

bounded by the selected participant group. For this study, five hermeneutic units were created in ATLAS.ti, one for each of the research objectives, other than the ‘compare and contrast’ objectives (RO1c and RO2c). Interview transcripts were imported into each ATLAS.ti hermeneutic unit, as listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Hermeneutic units created within ATLAS.ti

Hermeneutic unit	Research objectives (RO)	Type of participant	
		Supervisor	Subordinate
Research objectives regarding subordinate’s trust in their direct supervisor (upward trust)			
1	RO1a: Elicit the supervisor behaviours that subordinates identify as impacting trust in their supervisor		✓
2	RO1b: Elicit the supervisor behaviours that supervisors perceive as impacting the direct subordinate’s trust in them	✓	
Research objectives regarding supervisor’s trust in their direct subordinate (downward trust)			
3	RO2a: Elicit the subordinate behaviours that supervisors identify as impacting trust in their subordinate	✓	
4	RO2b: Elicit the subordinate behaviours that subordinates perceive as impacting the direct supervisor’s trust in them		✓
Research objective regarding organisational structure			
5	RO3: Identify how trust between staff is affected by elements of organisational structure	✓	✓

Within each ATLAS.ti hermeneutic unit, utterances relevant to the particular research objective were identified. These utterances were given an invivo code name. Whenever a non-unique utterance (i.e. relating to the same theme) occurred within an interview, such utterances were hyperlinked within ATLAS.ti. The exception to this was if a code was considered to have a distinctly different context.

To ensure the number of codes used to indicate groundedness across the study were representative, it was important to prevent generating multiple codes for utterances relating to the same theme within an interview. An example of the decision making in which multiple utterances were hyperlinked to generate a single code is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

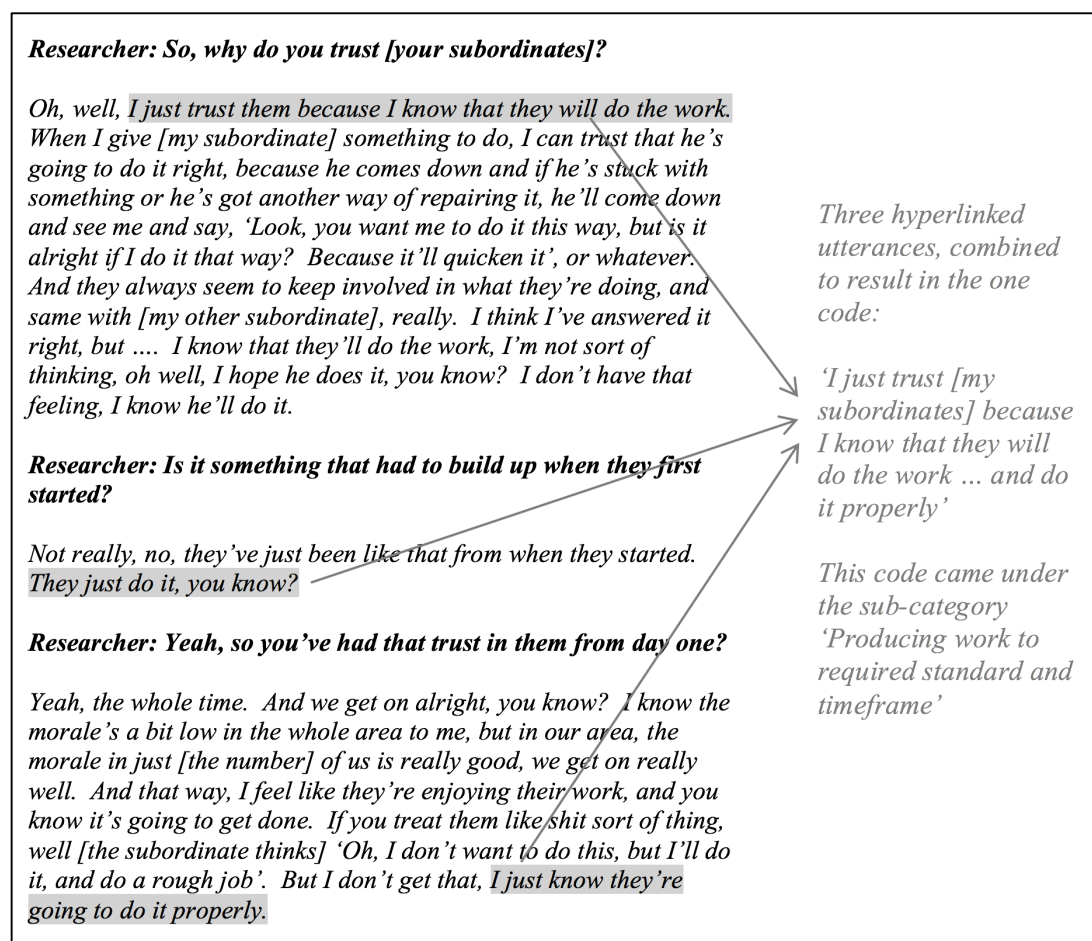


Figure 4.1 Example of hyperlinking similar utterances from an interview transcript

Similar codes were grouped together into categories as themes began to emerge from the data. Categories were treated to constant review and comparison throughout the iterative coding and analysis process. Categories were fluid; they were merged, divided or renamed as data collection, coding and analysis continued. Where there were several codes within a category that related to a more specific theme, these codes were separated out as a sub-category. Similar categories were also grouped together to form a higher abstract concept. These four levels of 'grouping' are shown in Figure 4.2.

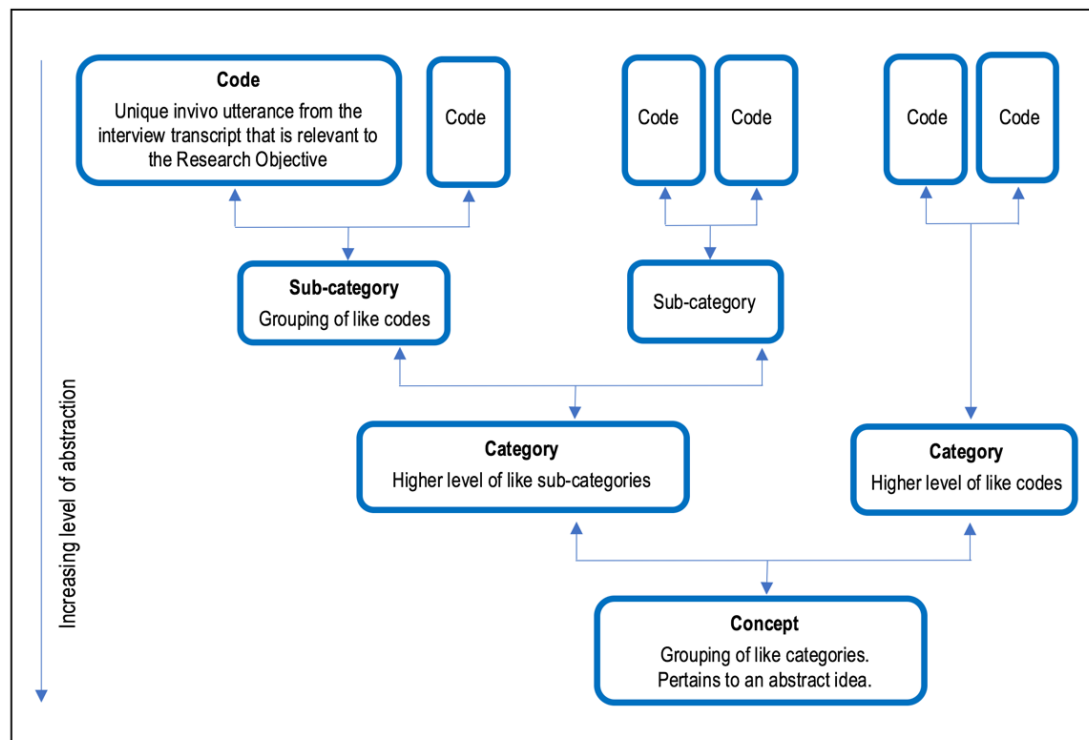


Figure 4.2 Analysis hierarchy

Following completion of data collection and the initial categorisation of codes within each ATLAS.ti hermeneutic unit, categories and sub-categories were compared between each paired research objective (RO).

1. Paired Research Objectives: RO1a and RO1b
2. (Examining upward trust by a *subordinate* from subordinate and supervisor perspectives)
3. Paired research objectives: RO2a and RO2b
4. (Examining downward trust by a *supervisor* from subordinate and supervisor perspectives)

This step occurred to facilitate the ‘compare and contrast’ research objectives (RO1c and RO2c). Where a sub-category existed in a hermeneutic unit due to the number of codes in that theme, the sub-category was created in the paired hermeneutic unit so the few (if any) relevant codes could be moved to this sub-category. For example, in the hermeneutic unit for research objective 2a, within the category of ‘competence’, the data supported a sub-category for ‘ability to grow in competence’, with eight relevant codes. However the paired hermeneutic unit (research objective 2b) only had one code

pertinent to ‘ability to grow in competence’. This one code was insufficient to create a sub-category within the relevant ATLAS.ti hermeneutic unit; however, to facilitate comparing groundedness between RO1a and RO1b data, the sub-category ‘ability to grow in competence’ was created in the hermeneutic unit for RO2b, and that one code allocated to it.

The same process occurred comparing RO2a and RO2b sub-categories in preparation the ‘compare and contrast’ analysis for RO2c. Figure 4.3 illustrates this process in a linear manner; however, as described in the methodology chapter, data collection and data analysis occurred concurrently, thus making this an iterative process.

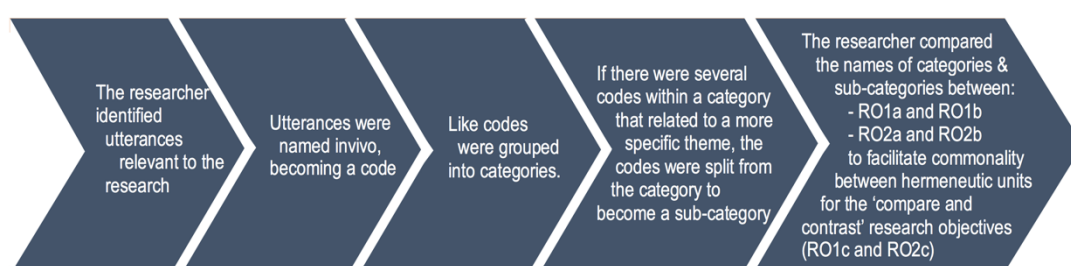


Figure 4.3 Analysis process

Codes were allocated only to one sub-category. However, there were some codes which were ‘linking codes’ (the ATLAS.ti software denotes such a link on diagrams by the phrase ‘is associated with’). Linking codes were placed in only one sub-category and the findings highlighted relationships between sub-categories, as per the example illustrated at Figure 4.4.

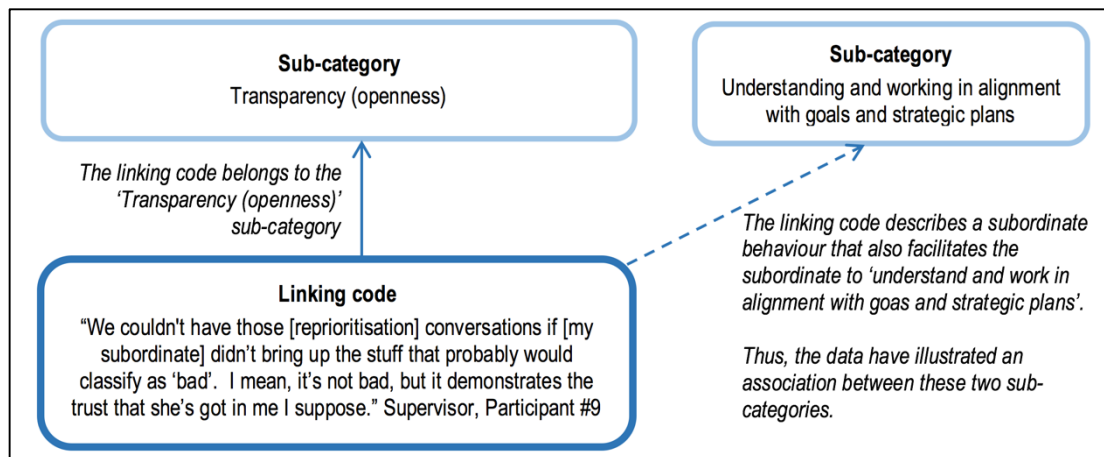


Figure 4.4 Example of linking codes

At the commencement of this study, four demographic units had been identified:

- Supervisors – white-collar
- Supervisors – blue-collar
- Subordinates – blue-collar
- Subordinates – white-collar

However, from the data, the location where participants were primarily based (head office or an out-station) emerged as a potential factor impacting upon the development of trust. Accordingly, each participant's work location was also noted. Codes were annotated with the following abbreviations indicating the demographic aspects of participants.

1. Hierarchical role the participant has in the organisation:

- SP = supervisor (the participant supervises other staff within the organisation)
- SB = subordinate (does not supervise any people within the organisation)

Note that supervisors responded to different interview questions pertaining to their role within the organisation as a supervisor (for RO1b and RO2a) and their role as a subordinate (for RO1a and RO2b).

2. Type of work undertaken by the participant:

- WC = white-collar (office based)
- BC = blue-collar (based in the field)

Some roles within the organisation included both office and field work. For the purpose of this study, ‘white-collar’ described a participant who had been allocated a dedicated landline (desk) telephone number by the organisation.

3. Main location the participant worked from:

- HO = head office (administrative centre for the local government)
- OS = out-station (i.e. a community centre, depot, library, recreation centre or waste facility; these facilities tend to have a greater focus on direct service delivery to the community.)

It may also help the reader to understand how ATLAS.ti, the software leveraged to manage data and support data analysis, visually presented codes, as these images were exported from ATLAS.ti for each category and sub-category and presented in this thesis (see Figure 4.5).

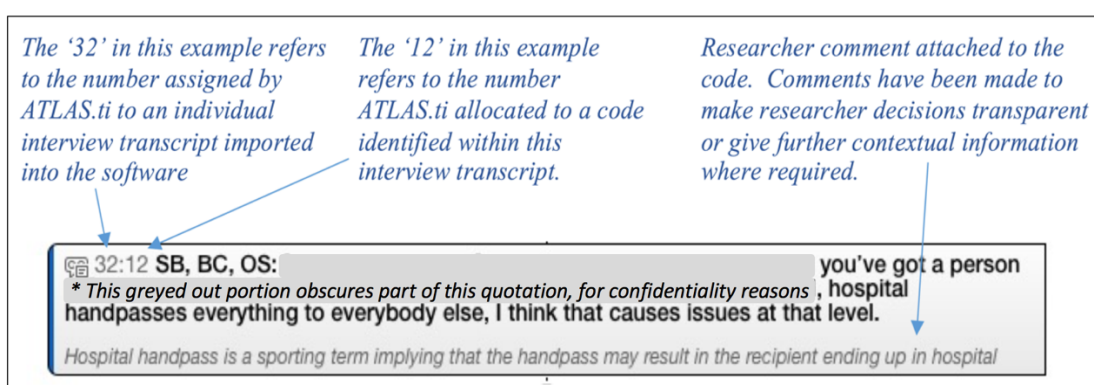


Figure 4.5 Explanation of how the ATLAS.ti software presents codes

By allocating a number to each interview transcript and then allocating a code number ensures each code has a unique code within that hermeneutic unit. Recall though that different ATLAS.ti hermeneutic units were created for each research objective, so the numbers allocated to any particular interview transcript varied by hermeneutic unit, thus supporting the confidentiality of data.

4.3 Findings for Research Objective 1

Research objectives regarding subordinate's trust in their direct supervisor (upward trust)

RO1a: Elicit the supervisor behaviours that a subordinate identifies as affecting trust in her supervisor

RO1b: Elicit the behaviours that a supervisor perceives to affect a subordinate's trust in herself

RO1c: Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO1a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO1b)

This research utilised semi-structured interviews due to the research emphasis upon understanding (Fontana & Frey, 1998). Semi-structured interviews facilitate ‘the subjects to organise their own descriptions, emphasising what they themselves find important’ (Kvale, 1993, p. 173), while retaining focus on the research question. Table 4.2 articulates RO1a, 1b and 1c and the related standard interview questions. In addition, probing and exploratory questions were asked where it was useful to gain a deeper understanding or identify the context in relation to the participant's response.

Table 4.2 Research objective 1 (RO1) and the related interview questions

Research objective (RO) 1: Subordinate trust in her supervisor	
ROs	Standard interview questions
RO1a	<p>Questions to subordinates (i.e. all participants) <i>(In the interview ‘your supervisor’ was replaced by the name of their direct supervisor)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is it that [your supervisor] does, the way s/he acts, the outputs of his/her work or whatever that makes you feel you can trust him/her? Is there anything [your supervisor] does that lowers your level of trust, or leads you to distrust him/her?
RO1b	<p>Questions to supervisors (only) These next questions are about how your staff trust you, as their supervisor.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think your staff observe about you, the way you work, the outputs of your work or whatever, that increases their trust in you? Can you give me an example? I’m going to ask about the converse now. What do you think would lead your staff to question their level of trust in you, or have less trust in you?
RO1c	n/a

A total of 54 subordinates were interviewed in relation to RO1a, which resulted in 191 codes for analysis. In relation to RO1b, there were 33 supervisors interviewed, which resulted in 137 codes for analysis. These codes were grouped into two concepts and six categories, although one category (trust in supervisor a result of trust in management as a whole) was not supported by subordinate data.

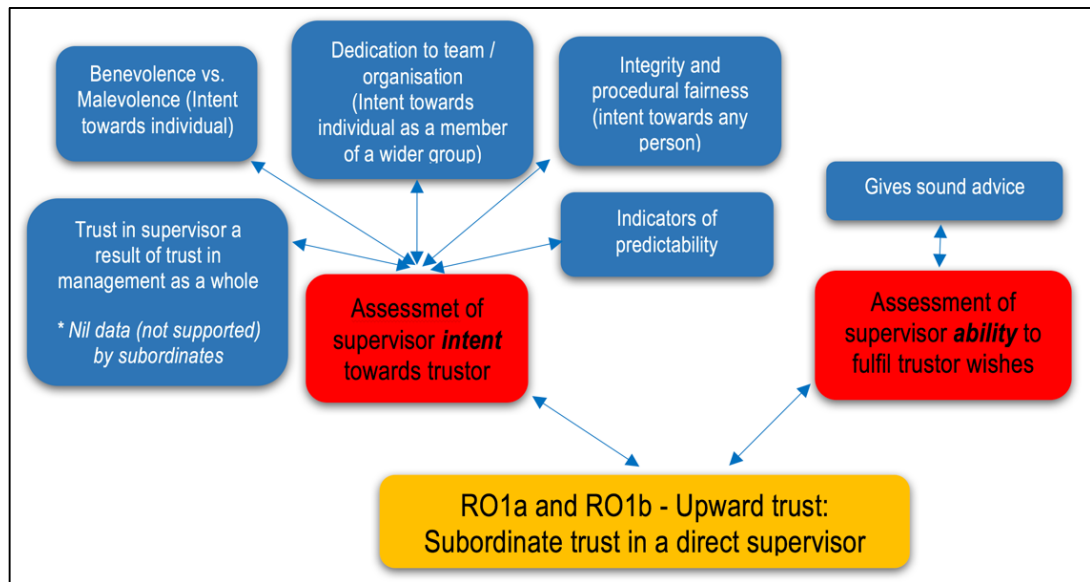


Figure 4.6 RO1a and 1b categories and sub-categories

Although the methodology of this study was not one of statistical analysis, the percentages of codes have been calculated to facilitate a direct comparison of relative groundedness of codes between (1) white- and blue-collar participants and (2) the 33 supervisors and 54 subordinates. As example, 10 codes from 33 interviews is more grounded than 10 codes within 54 interviews. These indicators of relative groundedness for participant groups are shown graphically without the figures (as shown in Figure 4.7) as the percentages were not used in a mathematical sense but simply to denote the strength of responses between participant groups.

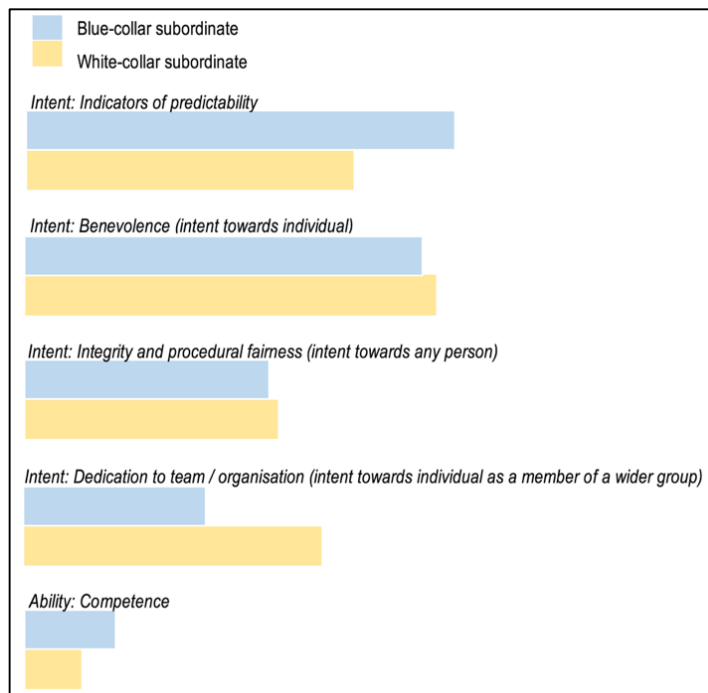


Figure 4.7 Example of graph denoting relative groundedness for the participant groups

For this study, the nine codes of the 597 total codes for research objectives 1 and 2 that contradicted a category were included in the percentage calculations for two reasons. Firstly, as nine out of 597 codes, the data were considered negligible in the overall comparison of relative groundedness of sub-categories/categories. Secondly, although labelled ‘contradictory codes’, rather than contradicting a sub-category outright, many of these codes instead provided nuance and context for when a sub-category applied. For example, a ‘contradictory code’ for a supervisor’s trust in their subordinate under the sub-category ‘producing work to required standard and timeframe’ provided the distinction that simply not producing such work was enough to impact trust, as frequency was also a consideration.

[I]f it happened time and time again then obviously, but unforeseeable things can happen and then the work doesn’t get done like you thought it would get done or to the level that you thought it would get done, but it’s not always because they’ve just said, ‘Oh, stuff it, I’m not doing the work’ ... it could be possible they’ve not fully understood the instructions or they’re having a bad day or whatever. (Supervisor, Participant #27)

In addition to groundedness, the demographics for the data are included in Table 4.3 (RO1) and Table 4.5 (RO2) as part of the findings on whether particular demographics

(e.g. white-collar versus blue-collar) were over- or under-represented within sub-categories. This analysis sheds light on whether a particular context was salient to participants' trust antecedent perceptions.

Table 4.3 Summary of findings for research objectives 1a, b, c

Category	Sub-category	RO1a: Supervisor behaviours identified by subordinates		RO1b Supervisor behaviours identified by supervisors		RO1c Compare and contrast reported trust-impacting behaviours (RO1a) with perceived behaviours (RO1b)
		RO1a (Subordinates actual)		RO1b: (Leaders perceived)		RO2c: compare and contrast RO1a and RO1b
		# of codes relating to increased trust	# of codes relating to decreased trust	# of codes relating to increased trust	# of codes relating to decreased trust	(Findings are then discussed further in Chapter 5, 'Discussion')
Concept: Intent						
Benevolence/ malevolence Total of 59 of the 191 subordinate codes from RO1a Total of 26 of the 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Treats subordinate as an un/trustworthy person	10 SP=7 / SB=3 WC=9 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=8	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=2	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=0	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=1	13 of 191 RO1a codes 2 of 137 RO1b codes Less well grounded for supervisors (perceived trust antecedents) than for subordinates (actual trust antecedents). Particularly relatively grounded for white-collar subordinates (12 WC vs 1 BC) working in out-stations (3 HO vs 10 OS).
	Supervisor increases the standing of / backs the subordinate in dealings with third parties	12 SP=8 / SB=4 WC=8 / BC=4 HO=2 / OS=10	10 SP=5 / SB=5 WC=9 / BC=1 HO=3 / OS=7	10 SP=10 / SB=0 WC=9 / BC=1 HO=6 / OS=4	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=3	22 of 191 RO1a codes 14 of 137 RO1b codes
	Empathy and care	9 SP=4 / SB=5 WC=5 / BC=4 HO=1 / OS=8	5 SP=4 / SB=1 WC=5 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=5	8 SP=7 / SB=0 WC=6 / BC=1 HO=3 / OS=5	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=1	14 of 191 RO1a codes 9 of 137 RO1b codes
	Supervisor support (miscellaneous)	7 SP=5 / SB=2 WC=3 / BC=4 HO=1 / OS=6	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=3	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=0	Nil data	10 of 191 RO1a codes 1 of 137 RO1b codes
Dedication (to team/ organisation) Total of 38 of the 191 subordinate codes from RO1a	Supervisor is conscientious in their own work	4 SP=2 / SB=2 WC=3 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=3	Nil data	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=2 HO=0 / OS=4	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=1	4 of 191 RO1a codes 6 of 137 RO1b codes
	Extent that formal power asymmetry is highlighted by supervisor	4 SP=1 / SB=3 WC=4 / BC=0 HO=2 / OS=2	2 SP=1 / SB=1 WC=1 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=2	14 SP=14 / SB=0 WC=9 / BC=5 HO=3 / OS=11	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=3	6 of 191 RO1a codes 20 of 137 RO1b codes

Total of 38 of the 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Supervisor enacts interdependence of achievement and accountability	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=0 HO=2 / OS=3	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=2	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=3	Nil data	7 of 191 RO1a codes 3 of 137 RO1b codes Only white-collar workers identified this as a trust antecedent.
	Supervisor listens to understand	2 SP=1 / SB=1 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=2	5 SP=4 / SB=1 WC=3 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=4	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=2	Nil data	7 of 191 RO1a codes 4 of 137 RO1b codes
	Supervisor is approachable / gives subordinate their time	6 SP=4 / SB=2 WC=4 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=5 1 code contradicting SP, WC, OS	8 SP=7 / SB=1 WC=8 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=7	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=3	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=2	14 of 191 RO1a codes, with 1 RO1a code contradicting 7 of 137 RO1b codes
Indicators of predictability Total of 50 of the 191 subordinate codes from RO1a Total of 48 of the 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Transparency (openness)	7 SP=4 / SB=3 WC=4 / BC=3 HO=1 / OS=6	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=2	12 SP=12 / SB=0 WC=12 / BC=0 HO=3 / OS=9	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=2	10 of 191 RO1a codes 15 of 137 RO1b codes No blue-collar supervisor identified supervisor transparency as a trust antecedent, although this may be as blue-collar supervisors are physically working out on site with their team, an environment in which openness is almost inherent.
	Honesty/Lying	10 SP=5 / SB=5 WC=7 / BC=3 HO=1 / OS=9	2 SP=1 / SB=1 WC=1 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=1	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=3	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=2	12 of 191 RO1a codes 6 of 137 RO1b codes
	Supervisor consistent	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=3	7 SP=6 / SB=1 WC=7 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=6	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=2	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=0 HO=2 / OS=2	10 of 191 RO1a codes 8 of 137 RO1b codes
	Supervisor clear in their expectations / direction	6 SP=5 / SB=1 WC=6 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=5	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=3	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=2 / OS=1	Nil data	9 of 191 RO1a codes 3 of 137 RO1b codes No blue-collar subordinate identified this as a trust antecedent
	Following through with agreed upon actions	4 SP=2 / SB=2 WC=2 / BC=2 HO=2 / OS=2 1 code contradicting SP, WC, OS	5 SP=3 / SB=2 WC=2 / BC=3 HO=1 / OS=4	10 SP=10 / SB=0 WC=9 / BC=1 HO=3 / OS=7	6 SP=6 / SB=0 WC=6 / BC=0 HO=3 / OS=3	9 of 191 RO1a codes, with 1 RO1a code contradicting 16 of 137 RO1b codes More grounded for supervisors (perceived trust antecedents) than subordinates (actual trust antecedents)

Integrity and procedural fairness Total of 35 of the 191 subordinate codes from RO1a Total of 17 of the 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Keeps a confidence	2 SP=1 / SB=1 WC=0 / BC=2 HO=0 / OS=2	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=2	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=3	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=2	5 of 191 RO1a codes 7 of 137 RO1b codes
	Fairness and resolution when issues with subordinate occur	3 SP=1 / SB=2 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=3	4 SP=2 / SB=2 WC=3 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=4	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=0	Nil data	7 of 191 RO1a codes 1 of 137 RO1b codes This sub-category received seven responses from out-station subordinates and nil from head office subordinates.
	Acceptability/alignment of values	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=1	3 SP=1 / SB=2 WC=1 / BC=2 HO=0 / OS=3	Nil data	Nil data	4 of 191 RO1a codes 0 of 137 RO1b codes
	Empowers by involving/consulting with subordinates	7 SP=7 / SB=0 WC=6 / BC=1 HO=5 / OS=2	1 SP=1 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=0	7 SP=7 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=2 HO=3 / OS=4	Nil data	8 of 191 RO1a codes 7 of 137 RO1b codes
	Conflict avoidance	7 SP=5 / SB=2 WC=6 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=5	4 SP=3 / SB=1 WC=3 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=2	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=1	Nil data	11 of 191 RO1a codes 2 of 137 RO1b codes
Trust in supervisor is a result of trust in the management group Three of 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Trust in supervisor relates to trust in management as a whole, rather than individual supervisor	Nil data	Nil data	Nil data	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=3 / OS=0	0 of 191 RO1a codes 3 of 137 RO1b codes
Concept: Ability						
Competence Total of 9 of the 191 subordinate codes from RO1a Total of 5 of the 137 supervisor codes from RO1b	Gives sound (work related) advice	7 SP=4 / SB=3 WC=5 / BC=2 HO=2 / OS=5	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=2	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=4	Nil data	9 of 191 RO1a codes 5 of 137 RO1b codes
TOTAL CODES		191 RO1a codes (excl. 2 contradicting codes)		137 RO1b codes		

Figure 4.8 illustrates the relative groundedness from each of the categories from the subordinate and supervisor perspectives. The most substantial disconnect between these hermeneutic groups are listed below.

1. Supervisors (perceived trust antecedents) placed the highest emphasis upon indicators of predictability, whereas ‘benevolence/malevolence’ was more salient for subordinates (actual trust antecedents).
2. Subordinates (actual trust antecedents) accorded ‘benevolence/malevolence’ nearly twice as much salience in relation to trust compared to supervisors (perceived trust antecedents).

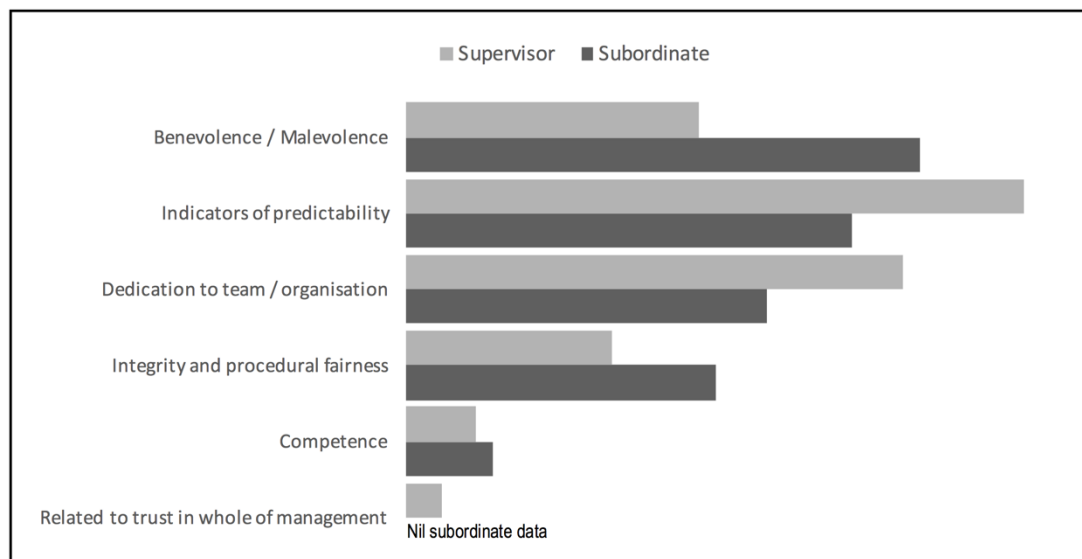


Figure 4.8 Groundedness comparison of upwards trust antecedents between supervisors and subordinates

As can be seen in Figure 4.9, there are only two areas where there is a complete disconnect between data from supervisors and subordinates on the antecedents of upwards trust.

1. Trust in a supervisor is impacted by trust in the whole of management rather than the individual supervisor’s behaviours.
2. The alignment of supervisor and subordinate values.

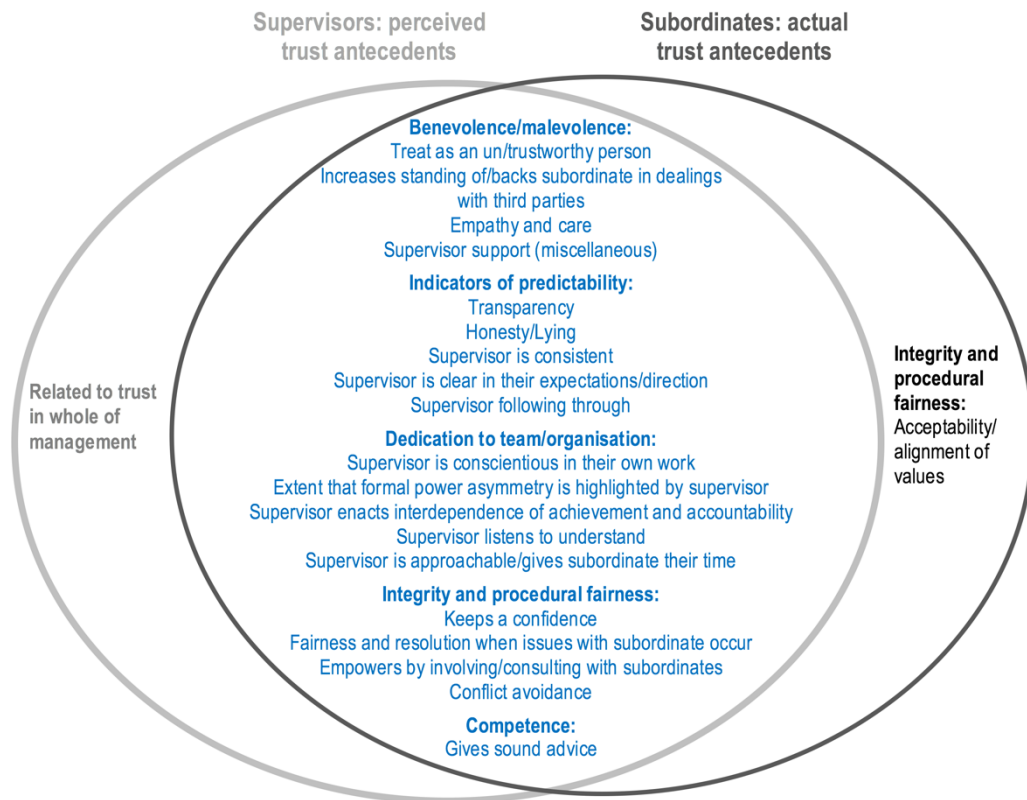


Figure 4.9 Alignment of actual and perceived trust antecedents for upwards trust

As a key interest of this study was to research the trust antecedents from blue-collar subordinates, the relative groundedness of categories was calculated from a blue-collar and white-collar subordinate codes (Figure 4.10). All categories are represented from each demographic, with similar groundedness evident for all categories other than:

- indicators of predictability; and
- dedication to team/organisation.

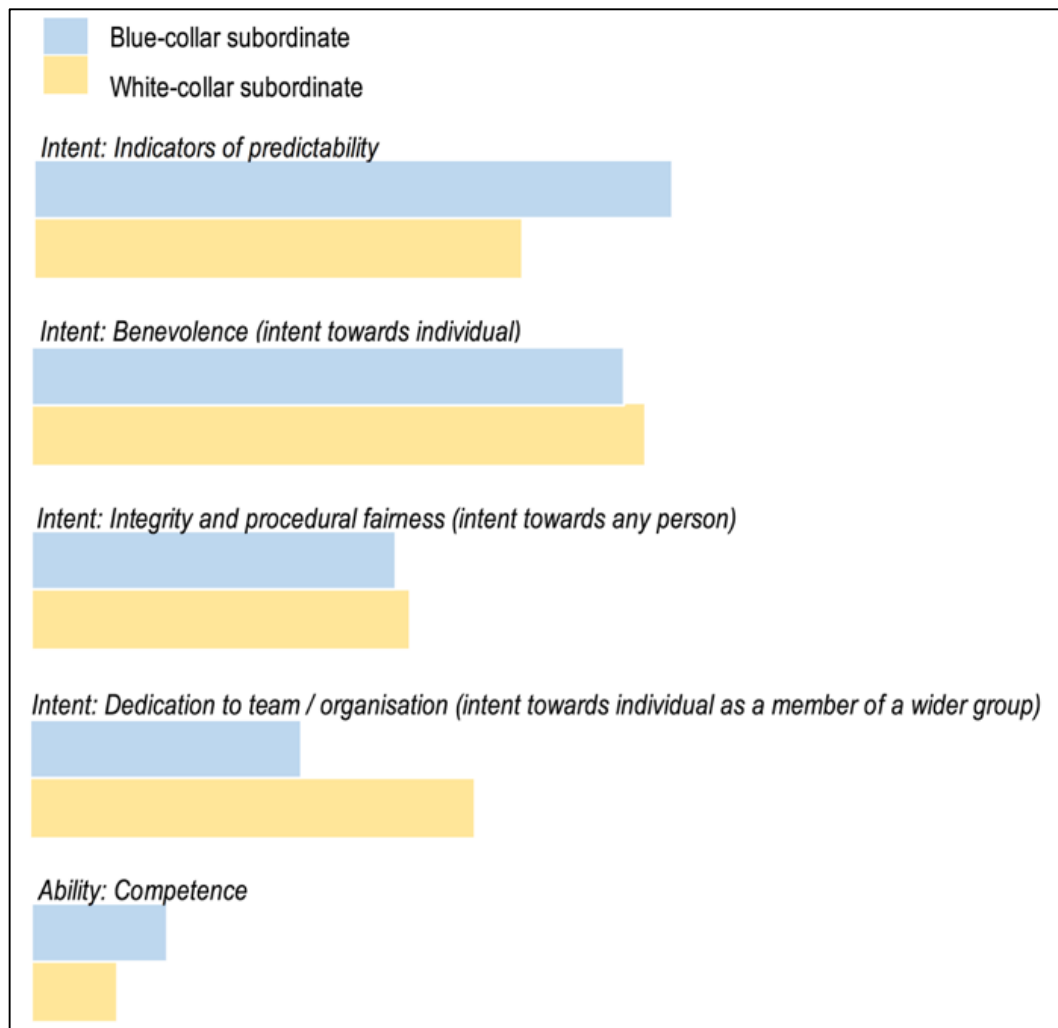


Figure 4.10 Groundedness comparison of categories between blue- and white-collar subordinates

Figure 4.11 illustrates the support from blue- and white-collar subordinates at the sub-category level. The largest difference in groundedness between these two demographic groups was from the below two sub-categories, both within the category of ‘indicators of predictability’.

1. Supervisor following through.
2. Supervisor clear in her expectations/direction.

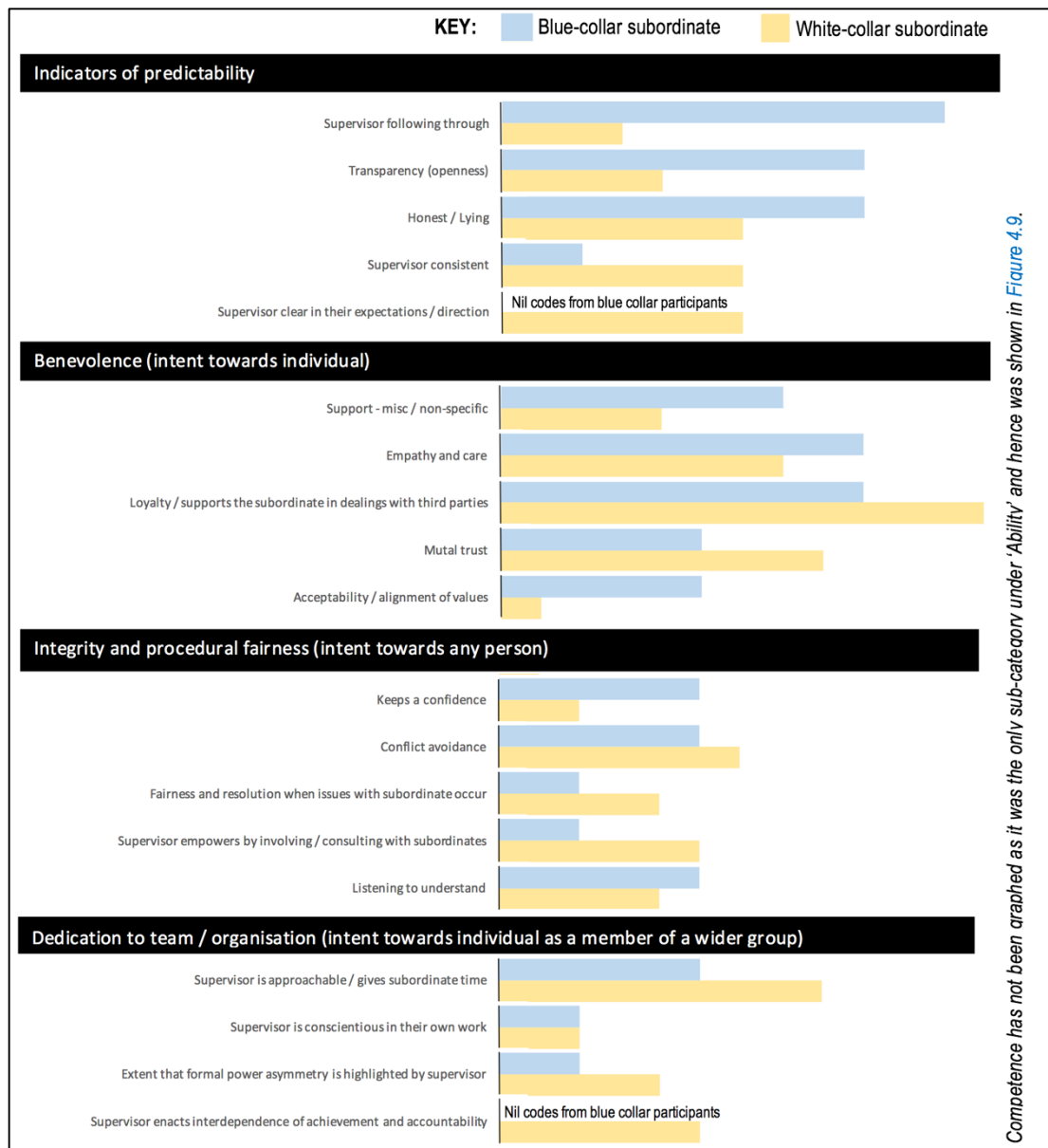


Figure 4.11 Groundedness comparison of sub-categories between blue- and white-collar subordinates

4.3.1 Concept: Assessment of supervisor intent towards trustor

For research objective 1 (subordinate trust in their supervisor), the concept of ‘intent’ encompassed 314 of the 328 codes, and was more complex in the range of categories and sub-categories than ‘ability’, the only other concept.

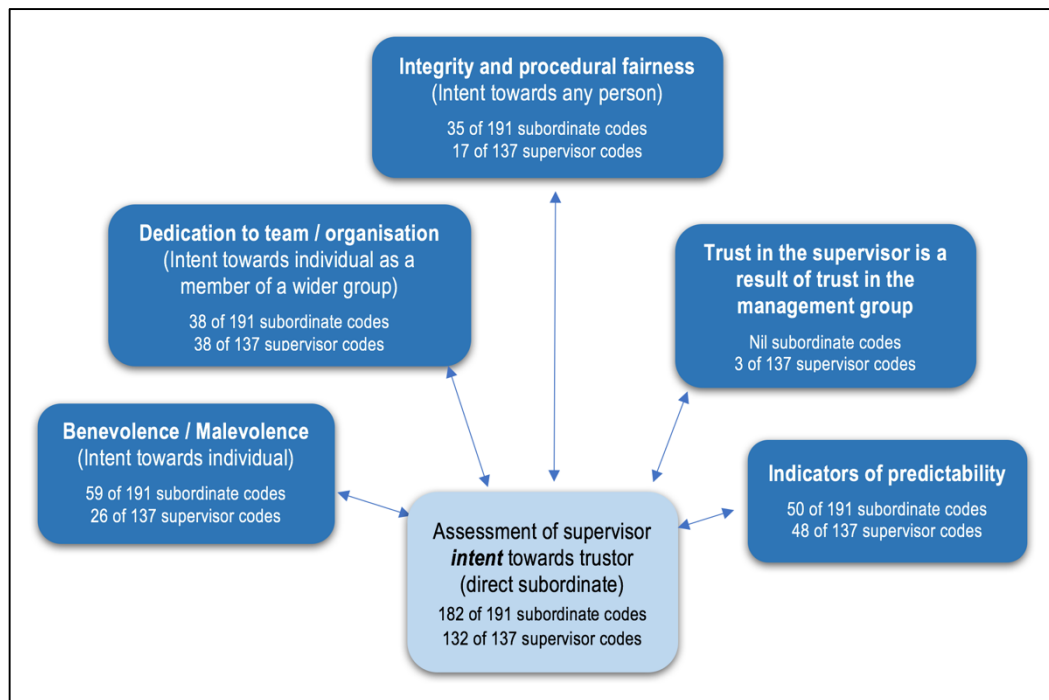


Figure 4.12 Concepts and categories for upward trust

All categories for ‘intent’ were supported by subordinate and supervisor data other than ‘Trust in the supervisor is a result of trust in the management group’, which was not supported by subordinate data.

Three of the categories appear to be nested intent; intent towards the individual, intent towards the individual as a part of a wider group and the intent which the supervisor has for any person. This study introduces the term ‘generalised intent’ for this ‘intent towards anyone’. ‘Generalised intent’ is the counterpoint to the existing term ‘generalised trust’ for trust that a trustor has for anyone prior to developing a relationship.

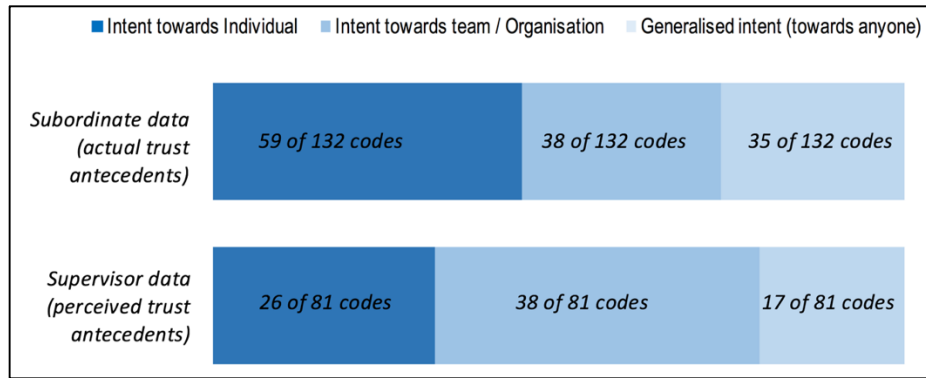


Figure 4.13 Grounded comparison for different levels of intent

Figure 4.13 illustrates the mismatch between the relative weight subordinates and supervisors ascribed to these three types of intent. The subordinates (with actual trust antecedents) in this research objective placed decreasing weight on the type of intent the further the distance it from themselves. However, the supervisor data (perceived trust antecedents) placed highest importance on their intent towards the subordinate as part of a wider group (team/organisation).

4.3.1.1 Category: Benevolence/malevolence

‘Benevolence/malevolence’ is the supervisor’s intent towards the subordinate, at the individual level. Given the groundedness of this category, with 59 of the 191 subordinate codes for RO1, it was a highly salient antecedent to upwards trust in the supervisor/subordinate dyad. However, ‘benevolence/malevolence’ was only 26 of 137 supervisor codes for RO1, indicating that supervisors did not perceive this as such an important trust antecedent; hence, there was a disjoint between the subordinate and supervisor points of view.

As shown in Figure 4.14, ‘benevolence/malevolence’ comprised four sub-categories.

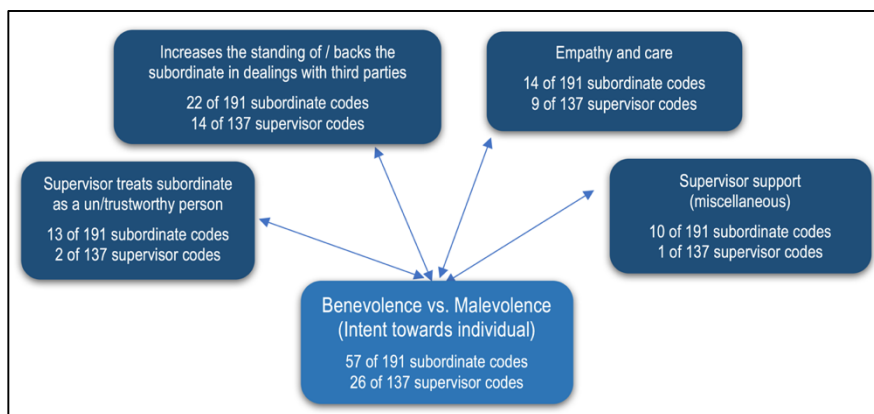


Figure 4.14 Sub-categories belonging to ‘benevolence/malevolence’ category

Sections 4.3.1.1.1 to 4.3.2.1

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4.3.3 Summary for research objective 1 (RO1)

Figure 4.45 displays all the concepts, categories, sub-categories and their relationships for RO1, providing a holistic view of the findings.

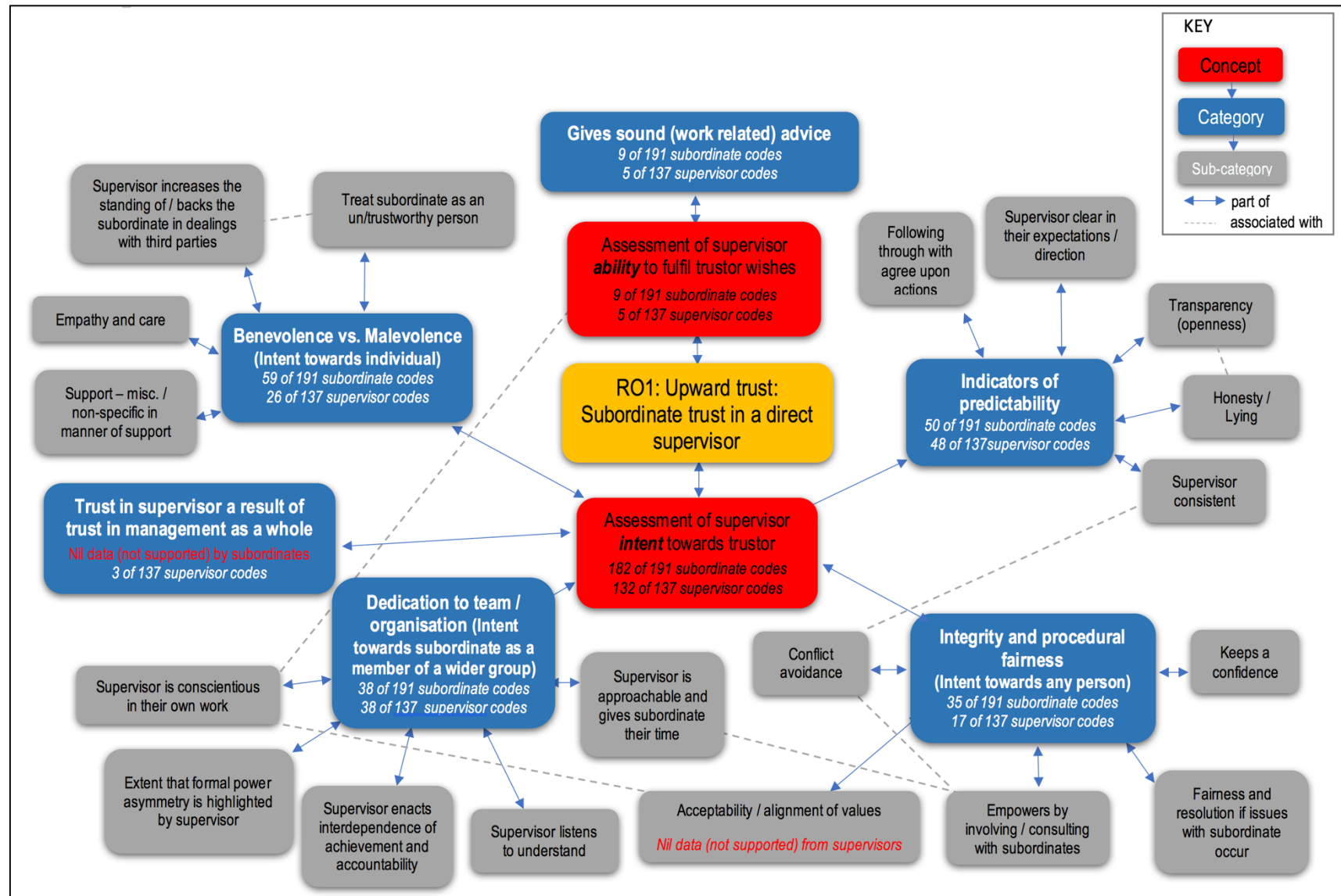


Figure 4.15 Map of all concepts, categories and sub-categories of upward trust (subordinate trust in her supervisor)

4.4 Findings for Research Objective 2

Research objectives regarding supervisor's trust in their direct subordinate (downward trust)

RO2a: *Elicit the subordinate behaviours that a supervisor identifies as affecting trust in her subordinate*

RO2b: *Elicit the behaviours that a subordinate perceives to affect a supervisor's trust in herself*

RO2c: *Compare and contrast the actual trust-affecting behaviours (RO2a) with perceived trust-affecting behaviours (RO2b)*

This section for RO2 is structured in the same format as the findings for RO1. The standard interview questions used to generate data for RO2 are listed in Table 4.4. However, as the interviews were semi-structured, probing and exploratory questions were asked subsequent to the standard questions where it was useful to gain a deeper understanding or identify the context in relation to the participant's response.

Table 4.4 RO2 and the related interview questions

Research objective (RO) 1: Subordinate trust in her supervisor	
RO's	Standard interview questions
RO2a	<p>Questions to supervisors (only)</p> <p>These questions are about the relationship between you and the people who report directly to you.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time, or what your staff do, that leads you to trust them. Tell me about a time, or what your staff do, that made you feel you didn't trust them.
RO2b	<p>Questions to subordinates (i.e. all participants)</p> <p><i>(In the interview 'your supervisor' was replaced by the name of the participant's supervisor)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What you think [your supervisor] sees in you (how you act for example, or the work you complete) that leads your supervisor to trust you? How did [your supervisor] demonstrate that s/he trusts you? Trust tends to be specific, for example, I might trust someone to return a book, but not trust them to look after my kids. Are there any circumstances where you do <u>not</u> feel trusted by [your supervisor]? How did [your supervisor] demonstrate that s/he did not trust you? Has there been anything that you have done, or failed to do, that has lowered [your supervisor's] level of trust in you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(If 'yes' response):</i> Please tell me about this <i>(If 'no' response):</i> Based on your knowledge of your supervisor, what would one of your team need to do, or fail to do, that would lower [your supervisor's] trust in that person?
RO2c	n/a

A total of 33 supervisors were interviewed in relation to RO2a, which resulted in 156 codes for analysis. In relation to RO2b, 55 subordinates were interviewed, which resulted in 131 codes for analysis. These codes were grouped into two concepts (intent and ability) and five categories. The data from research objective 2a and 2b supported, to various degrees, all concepts and categories (Figure 4.16).

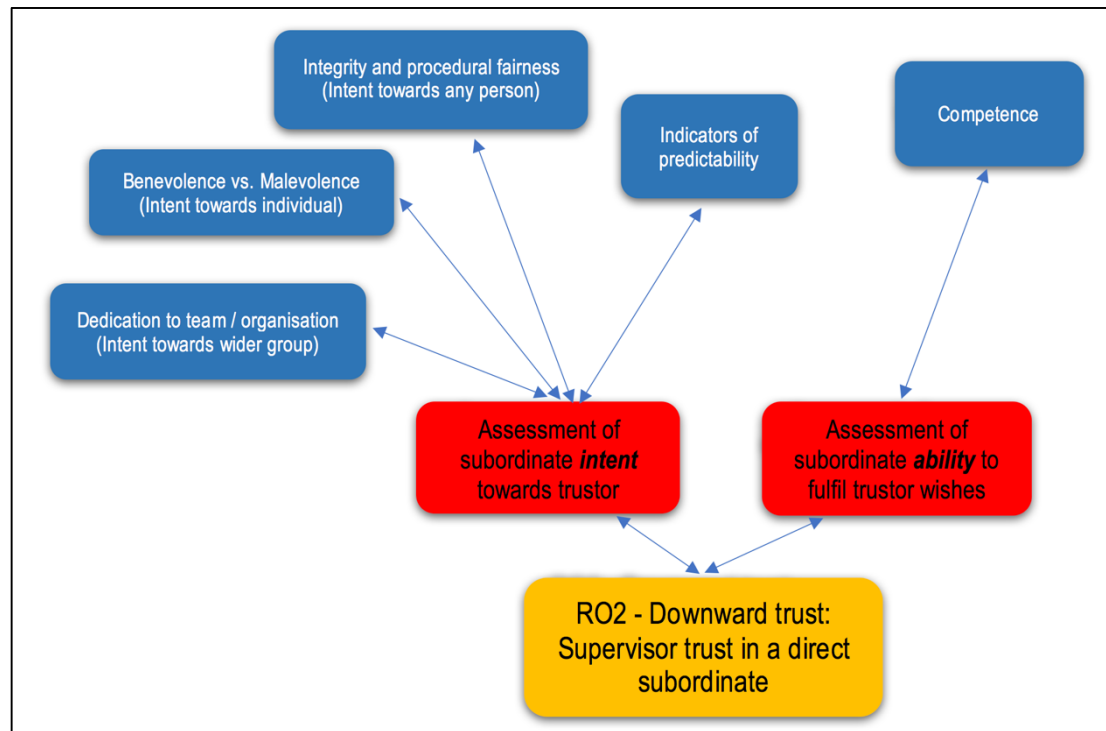


Figure 4.16 RO2b concepts and categories

Table 4.5 Summary of findings for RO2a, b and c

Category	Sub-category	RO2a: Subordinate behaviours identified by supervisors		RO2b Subordinate behaviours perceived by subordinates		RO2c Compare and contrast reported trust impacting behaviours (RO2a) with perceived behaviours (RO2b)
		RO2a (Supervisors actual)		RO2b: (Subordinates perceived)		RO2c: compare and contrast RO2a and RO2b
		# of codes relating to increased trust	# of codes relating to decreased trust	# of codes relating to increased trust	# of codes relating to decreased trust	Number and for comparison between RO2a and RO2b, the percentages of codes
Concept: Intent						
Benevolence/malevolence Total of 17 of 140 supervisor codes from RO2a Total of 8 of 129 subordinate codes from RO2b	Treats as an un/trustworthy person	3 SP=3/ SB=0 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=1	2 SP=2 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=0 / OS=2	1 SP, WC, HO	1 SB, BC, OS	5 of 140 RO2a codes 2 of 129 RO2b codes
	Increases the standing of/backs supervisor in dealings with third parties	6 SP=6 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=1 HO=4 / OS=2	6 SP=6 / SB=0 WC=6 / BC=0 HO=3 / OS=3	5 SP=4/ SB=1 WC=3 / BC=2 HO=0 / OS=5	1 SP, BC, OS	12 of 140 RO2a codes 6 of 129 RO2b codes, with 1% contradicting RO2b code Grounded from both leader (13 codes) and subordinates' (6 codes) point of view, however there was one code contradicting to loyalty to supervisor
				1 code contradicting SP, BC, OS		
Dedication to the team / organisation Total of 26 of 140 supervisor codes from RO2a Total of 20 of 129 subordinate codes from RO2b	Dedication to the work team	7 SP=7 / SB=0 WC=5/ BC=2 HO=1 / OS=6	4 SP=4 / SB=0 WC=3 BC=1 HO=0 / OS=4	Nil	2 SP=1 / SB=1 WC=2 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=1	11 of 140 RO2a codes 2 of 129 RO2b codes Grounded from supervisors (RO2a), particularly from supervisors in out-stations (10 of 11 codes). The one head office participant leads a team that was an internal service provider and so works across all facilities. Dedication to the work team therefore appears more salient for leaders of teams where the type of work results in subordinates not being in physical proximity to the leader for the majority of the work time. However, it was not well grounded from subordinates' perception (RO2b).
	Dedication to the organisation	6 SP=6 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=1 HO=3 / OS=1	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=4/ BC=1 HO=2 / OS=3	12 SP =6 / SB=6 WC=8 / BC=4 HO=2 / OS=10	3 SP =0 / SB=3 WC=0 / BC=3 HO=0 / OS=3	11 of 140 RO2a codes 15 of 129 RO2b codes
	Dedication in relation to attendance	Nil data	Nil data	1 SP, BC, OS	2 SP =2 / SB=0 WC=1 / BC=1 HO=0 / OS=2	Nil RO2a codes 3 of 129 RO2b codes The subordinates who perceive 'attendance' as impacting trust positively or negatively work in out-station/s.

	Understanding and working in alignment with goals and strategic plans	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO= 2/ OS=1	1 SP, WC, OS	Nil data	Nil data	4 of 140 RO2a codes Nil RO2b codes Subordinates did not identify this sub-category as a trust antecedent
Indicators of predictability Total of 38 of 140 supervisor codes from RO2a Total of 33 of 129 subordinate codes from RO2b	Transparency (openness)	17 SP=17 / SB=0 WC=12 / BC=5 HO=4 / OS=13	Nil data	6 SP =2 / SB=4 WC=5 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=5	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=0 HO=1 / OS=2	17 of 140 RO2a codes 9 of 129 RO2b codes Supervisors did not identify lack of transparency as a factor that decreased trust, which was in contrast to subordinate perceptions (RO2b).
	Honesty/lying	7 SP=7 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=4 HO=2 / OS=5	14 SP=14 / SB=0 WC=9 / BC=5 HO=1 / OS=13	14 SP = 9/ SB=5 WC=10 / BC=4 HO=5 / OS=9	10 SP=6 / SB=4 WC=6 / BC=4 HO=1 / OS=9	21 of 140 RO2a codes 24 of 129 RO2b codes
Integrity and procedural fairness Total of 6 of 140 supervisor codes from RO2a Total of 7 of 129 subordinate codes from RO2b	Keeps a confidence	1 SP, BC, OS	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=4	4 SP=3 / SB=1 WC=2 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=3	3 SP=2 / SB=1 WC= 2/ BC=1 HO=1 / OS=2	6 of 140 RO2a codes 7 of 129 RO2b codes
Concept: Ability						
Competence Total of 53 of 140 supervisor codes from RO2a Total of 61 of 129 subordinate codes from RO2b	Producing work (current tasks) to required standard and timeframe	32 SP=32 / SB=0 WC=24 / BC=8 HO=9 / OS=23	8 SP=8 / SB=0 WC=5 / BC=3 HO=3 / OS=5	35 SP=22 / SB=13 WC=22 / BC=13 HO=9 / OS=26	15 SP=9 / SB=6 WC=11 / BC=4 HO=3 / OS=12	40 of 140 RO2a codes supporting 6 of 140 RO2a codes contradicting 50 of 129 RO2b codes
		6 contradicting codes SP=6 / SB=0 WC=3 / BC=2 HO=1 / OS=5		Nil data	Nil data	
	Initiative	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=1 HO=2 / OS=3	Nil data	Nil data	Nil data	5 of 140 RO2a codes Nil RO2b codes
	Political astuteness and emotional intelligence	Nil data	Nil data	5 SP =4 / SB=1 WC=5 / BC=0 HO=3 / OS=2	5 SP=3 / SB=2 WC=4 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=4	Nil RO2a codes 10 of 129 RO2b codes Supervisors did not identify this sub-category as as a trust antecedent
	Ability to grow in competence (future tasks)	3 SP=3 / SB=0 WC=2 / BC=1 HO=1 / OS=2	5 SP=5 / SB=0 WC=4 / BC=1 HO=0/ OS=5	1 SB, WC, HO	Nil data	8 of 140 RO2a codes 1 of 129 RO2b codes
TOTAL CODES		140 RO2a codes (excl. contradicting codes)		129 RO2b codes (excl. contradicting codes)		

In contrast with upwards trust (RO1), there was alignment between the ranking of importance (as indicated by the groundedness of codes) between subordinates and supervisors for downwards trust, as illustrated in Figure 4.17.

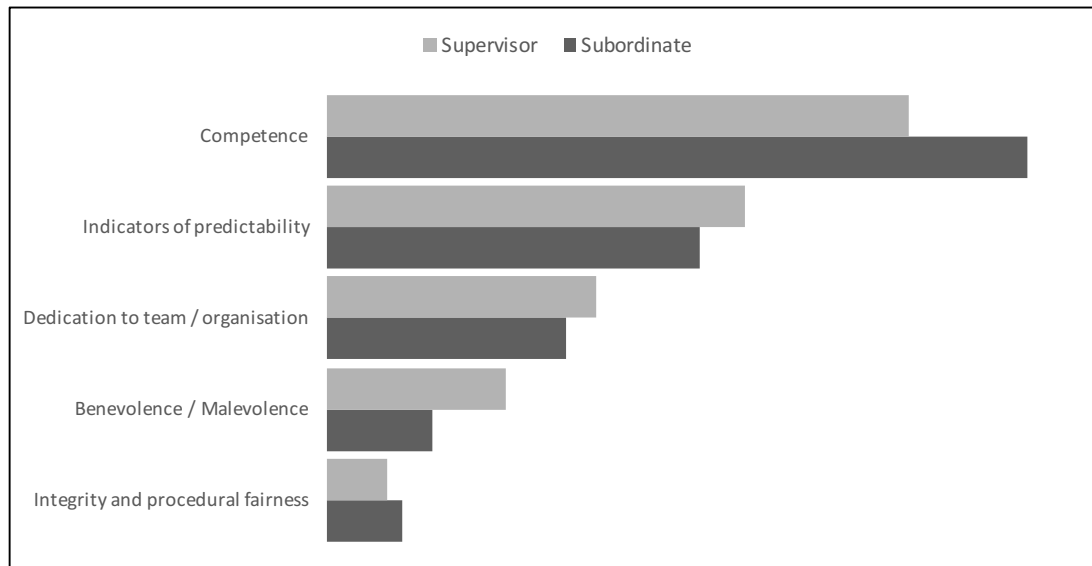


Figure 4.17 Groundedness comparison of downwards trust (supervisor trust in subordinate) antecedents between subordinates and supervisor

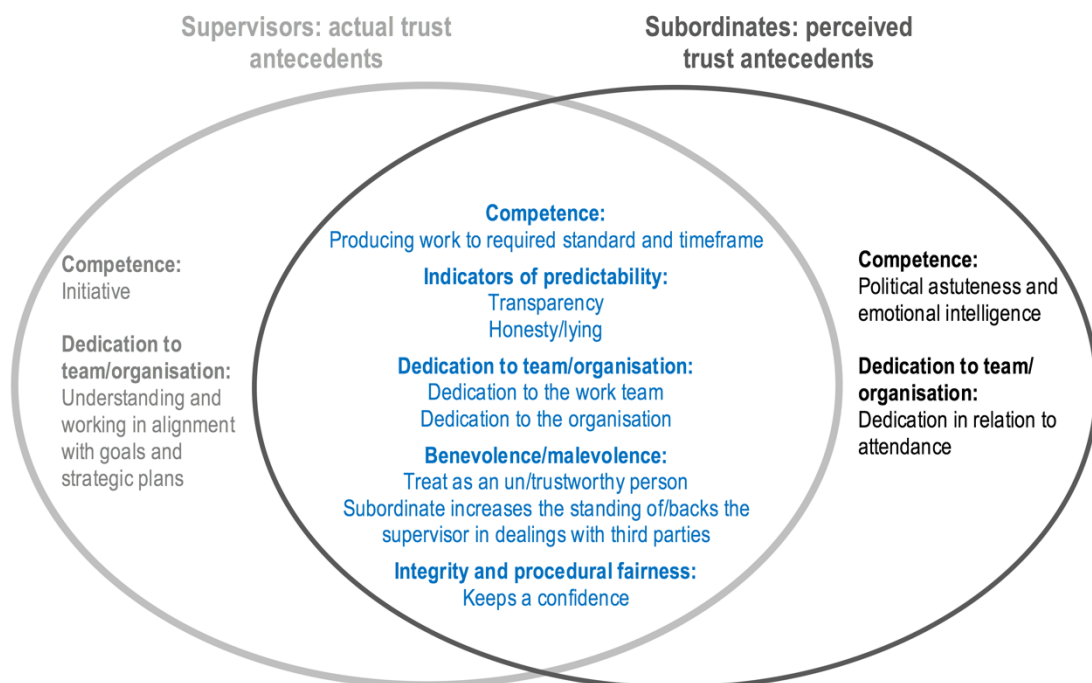


Figure 4.18 Alignment of actual and perceived trust antecedents for downwards trust (supervisor trust in subordinate)

4.4.1 Concept: Intent

From the data collected in this study, there were two concepts in relation to downwards trust (a supervisor's trust in their subordinate); the supervisor's assessment of the subordinate's intent and ability. From supervisor data, intent was the more grounded concept, although subordinates in this study perceived the importance of intent and ability as almost equal.

Intent encompassed four categories, as shown in Figure 4.19.

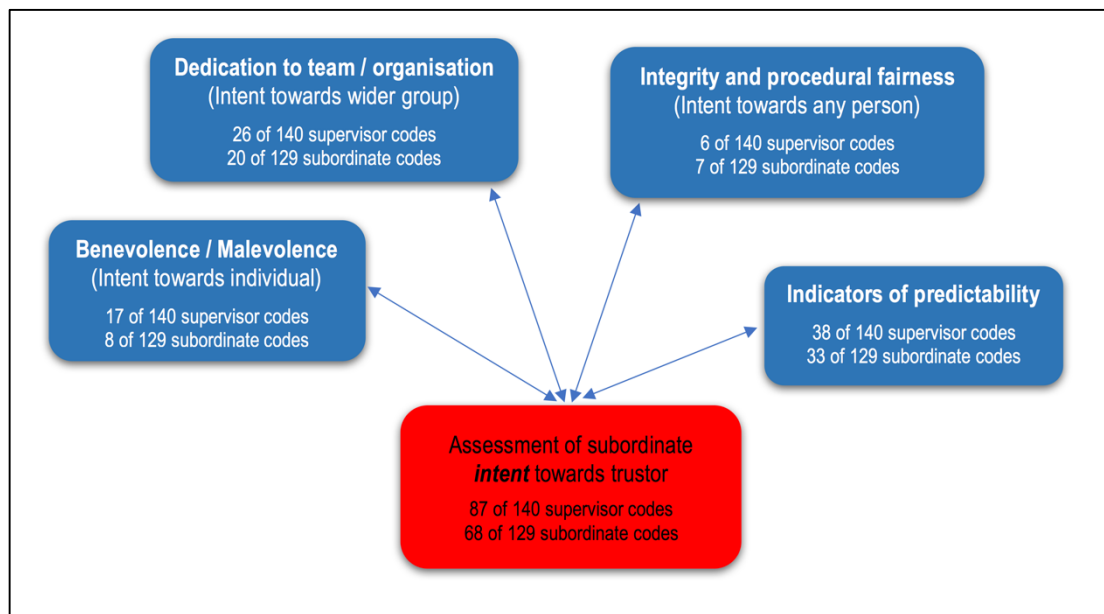


Figure 4.19 Concepts and categories for downward trust

4.4.1.1 Category: Benevolence or malevolence towards supervisor (mutual trust)

This category comprised two sub-categories; ‘treat supervisor as an un/trustworthy person’ and ‘increases the standing of/backs the supervisor in dealings with third parties’ (see Figure 4.20).

This category received slightly more support from supervisors (17 of 140 codes) than subordinates (eight of 129 codes).

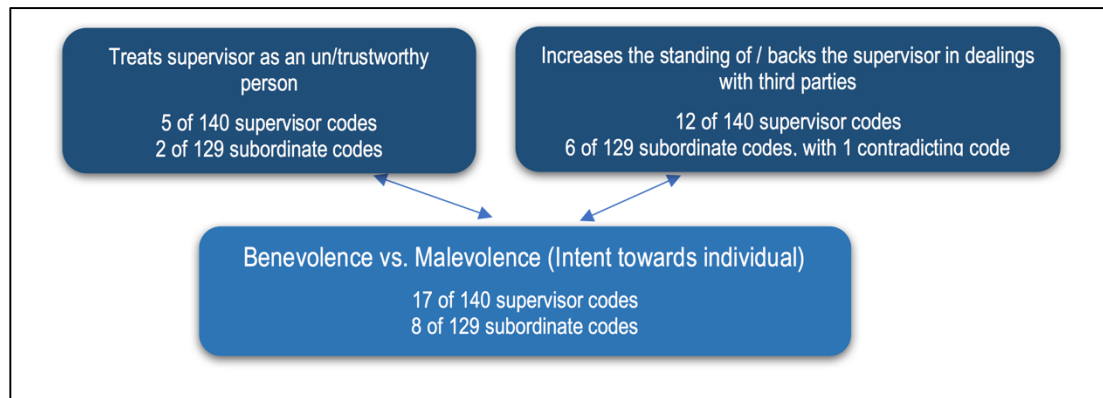


Figure 4.20 Sub-categories of ‘Benevolence/malevolence (mutual trust) category

Sections 4.4.1.1.1 to 4.4.2.1.4

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4.4.2 Summary for research objective 2 (RO2)

Figure 4.73 displays all the concepts, categories, sub-categories and their relationships for RO2, providing a holistic view of the findings.

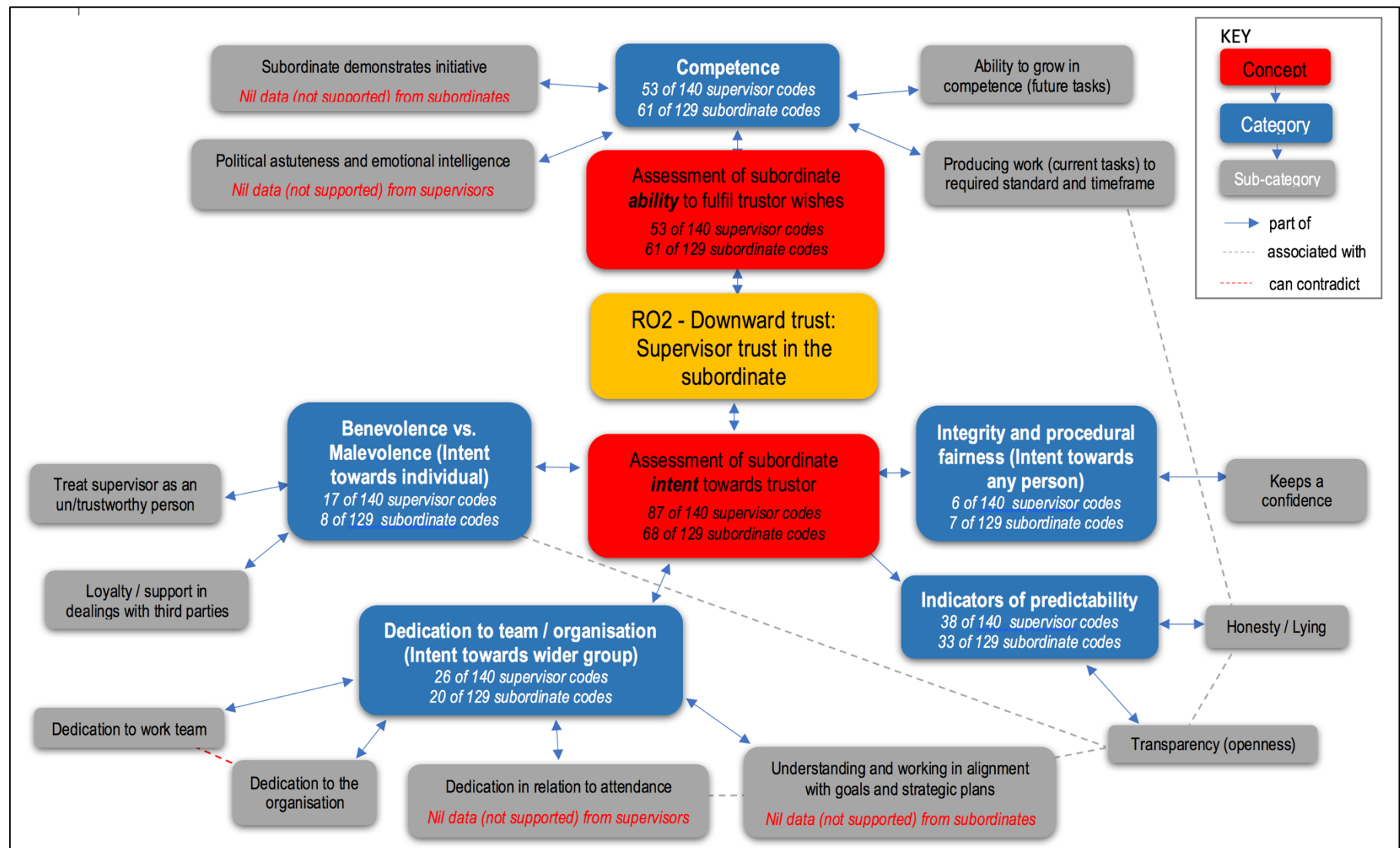


Figure 4.21 Map of all concepts, categories and sub-categories of downward trust ('supervisor trust in her subordinate')

4.4.3 Comparison of trust antecedents for subordinates (RO1a) and supervisors (RO2a)

One of the benefits of grounded theory research design is that insights are produced outside the original inputs, such as the research objectives. The ‘compare and contrast’ research objectives for this study were to contrast actual trust and perceived trust antecedents (i.e. compare RO1a with RO1b and RO2a with RO2b). However, as the data analysis progressed, the stark contrast of the gap between the relative weight of trust antecedents that subordinates and supervisors placed upon ability and intent was considered to be important to highlight. This gap is evident in Figure 4.22.

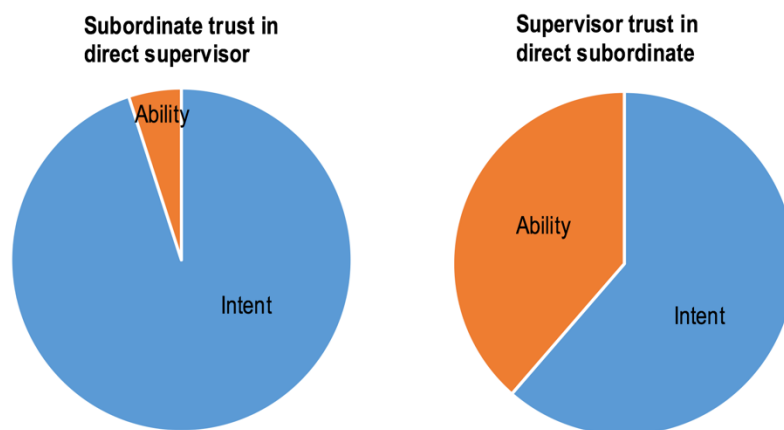


Figure 4.22 Comparison of groundedness for actual trust antecedents (at ‘concept’ level) for supervisors and subordinates

Breaking this down further to the category level, as illustrated in Figure 4.23 within the supervisor–subordinate dyad, subordinates placed greater weight on the trust antecedents ‘benevolence/malevolence’ (i.e. intent towards individual) and ‘integrity and procedural fairness’ (i.e. intent towards anyone).

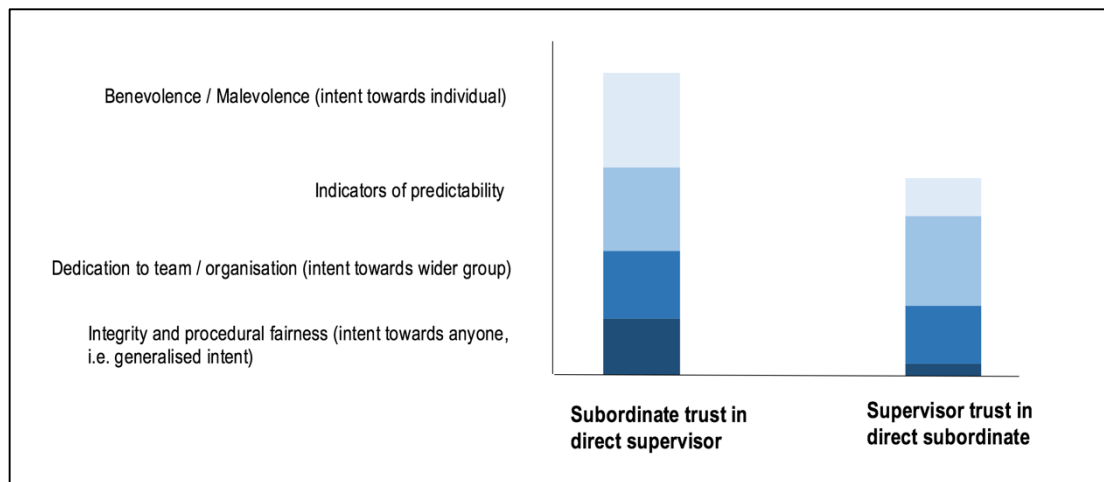


Figure 4.23 Cumulative graph comparison of groundedness for actual trust antecedents (at ‘category’ level) under ‘Intent’ category

The relative grounding (quantity) of the sub-categories for actual trust for subordinates (RO1a) and supervisors (RO2a) was also reflected in the relative richness or sparseness of the codes. As illustrated by the sample of codes following, the codes (quotations) from subordinates pertaining to benevolence/malevolence are more detailed compared to codes from supervisors.

Subordinate data from RO1a dataset (actual trust antecedents) for ‘benevolence/malevolence’:

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This compares to supervisor data from RO2a dataset (actual trust antecedents) for ‘benevolence/malevolence’:

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A sample of subordinate data from RO1 dataset (actual trust antecedents) related to increased trust for ‘integrity and procedural fairness (intent towards anyone):

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This compares to the only code for increased trust within the supervisor data RO2a dataset (actual trust antecedents) for ‘integrity and procedural fairness (intent towards anyone):

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A sample of subordinate data from RO1 dataset (actual trust antecedents) related to increased trust for ‘competence’:

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A sample of supervisor data from RO2 dataset (actual trust antecedents) related to increased trust for ‘competence’:

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4.5 Findings for Research Objective 3

As discussed in Chapter 3 (‘Methodology’), RO3 was amended.

Original RO3

Identify how trust *between a subordinate and supervisor* is perceived to be affected by elements of organisational structure

Amended RO3

Identify how trust between staff *in the organisation* is perceived to be affected by elements of organisational structure

Figure 4.24 Amendment to RO3

The analysis process for RO3 was the same as for the previous research objectives. Utterances relating to trust-impacting behaviours/events were identified and given an in vivo code name. Non-unique utterances occurring within an interview were linked so that they only generated one code. Similar codes were grouped together to become a category. Similar categories were grouped together, as higher abstract concepts.

Categories and concepts were treated to constant review throughout the coding and analysis process.

This study employed semi-structured interviews. The common questions posed to participants pertinent to research objective 3 are listed in Figure 4.25. In addition to these standard questions, probing and exploratory questions were utilised to gain a richer understanding of participants' responses.

Now I am going to ask you some general questions about the [organisation] as a whole. Some people have struggled to talk about the whole organisation, so you can just talk about your area if that is easier.

- a. How do you think the organisation, the way it is set up, or its systems, helps trust between *staff? Can you give any examples of this?
- b. How do you think the organisation, the way it is set up, or its systems, hinders trust between *staff? Can you give any examples?
- c. What is the worst story about trust within this organisation?
- d. What is the best story about trust in the organisation?
- e. Can you give me any examples of where the 'walk and the talk' of this organisation don't match?
- f. Any examples of where they do it well, where the 'walk and the talk' do match?
- g. Can you describe any issues around power or control that make trust easy or difficult at [the organisation]?
- h. Are there any things that you would like to stop or decrease, to help build trust between staff within your organisation?
- i. Are there any things that you would like to see start or do more of, to build trust between staff within your organisation?

** Prior to the amendment to RO3, the question related to 'supervisors and subordinates' rather than 'staff'.*

Figure 4.25 - Standard interview questions relating to RO3

The data that emerged fell into three distinct themes. These were:

- trust in individuals within management (excluding the participant's supervisor, as that data related to RO1);

- trust in colleagues within other functional areas; and
- the aspects of organisational structure which impacted on trust between staff in the organisation, which primarily were human resources practices.

During analysis, it became evident that the first two of these themes were similar to research objectives 1 and 2, namely an increase or decrease of trust in individuals arising from their behaviours. It is interesting that this occurred and it may a result of multiple reasons, such as the necessary broadness of the interview questions (as exploratory research); the challenge for participants to draw impromptu conclusions between intangible notions of organisational structure and trust; or the inexperience of the researcher and the intertwined nature of trust, wherein behaviours impacting trust were embedded within the context of the organisation. However, the third theme that arose from the data did relate directly and narrowly to research objective 3. The data for all three themes was analysed and provides fascinating and rich insight into multi-level trust within this organisation.

As part of the reflection upon why three themes emerged rather than just the initially sought theme, the standard interview questions were examined to determine their success in eliciting data on organisational structure (research objective 3). Participant responses to the standard interview questions (i.e. excluding the probing or follow-up questions) were analysed. As illustrated in Figure 4.26, all of the standard questions were successful to varying degrees in eliciting data pertaining to organisational structure. So, although the interview questions were broad, this graph indicates that the range of questions and asking participants to consider organisational structure from multiple angles was useful for gathering rich data.

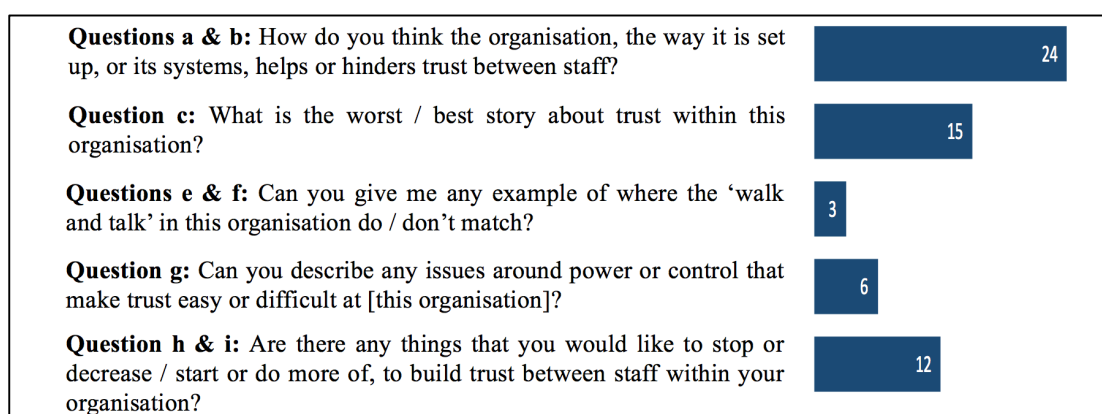


Figure 4.26 Proportion of participant answers relating to organisational structure from RO3 interview questions

All RO3 themes and their related concepts and categories were illustrated at Figure 4.27. Mirroring RO1 and RO2, there were two commonalities for trust in a colleague and trust in an individual in a management role. These were the trustor's assessment of:

- the ability of the individual to fulfil the wishes of the trustor;
- the benevolence the individual had towards the trustor, which informed the intent the trustee had in relation to fulfilling the wish of the trustor.

'Trust in a colleague' encompassed two more concepts than 'trust in an individual in a management role'. These are discussed in more detail later; however, these concepts are briefly listed below.

1. In relation to trust in colleagues, an action by management was perceived to impact trust in colleagues, namely whether an individualistic / functional area frame versus whole-of-organisation frame was emphasised. The data indicated that when organisational structures placed greater significance upon functional areas, such as competing for resources against other functional areas, this reinforced functional silos, potentially creating a barrier to trusting colleagues in other functional areas.
2. In relation to trust in colleagues, the data indicated that events or places which created interactions between colleagues wherein benevolence could be initiated, or buttressed, thus supported trust.

In relation to trust in individuals within management, indicators of predictability were salient to trustors. This mirrored the data from RO1 (trust in a direct supervisor). Four of the five categories within the concept for RO1 and RO3 were broadly similar (indicators of predictability, follow through, transparency, honesty and consistency). However, for RO1 there was one unique category: 'supervisor clear in their expectations / direction'. For RO3 there was also one unique category: 'politicisation, leading to inconsistencies in operating'.

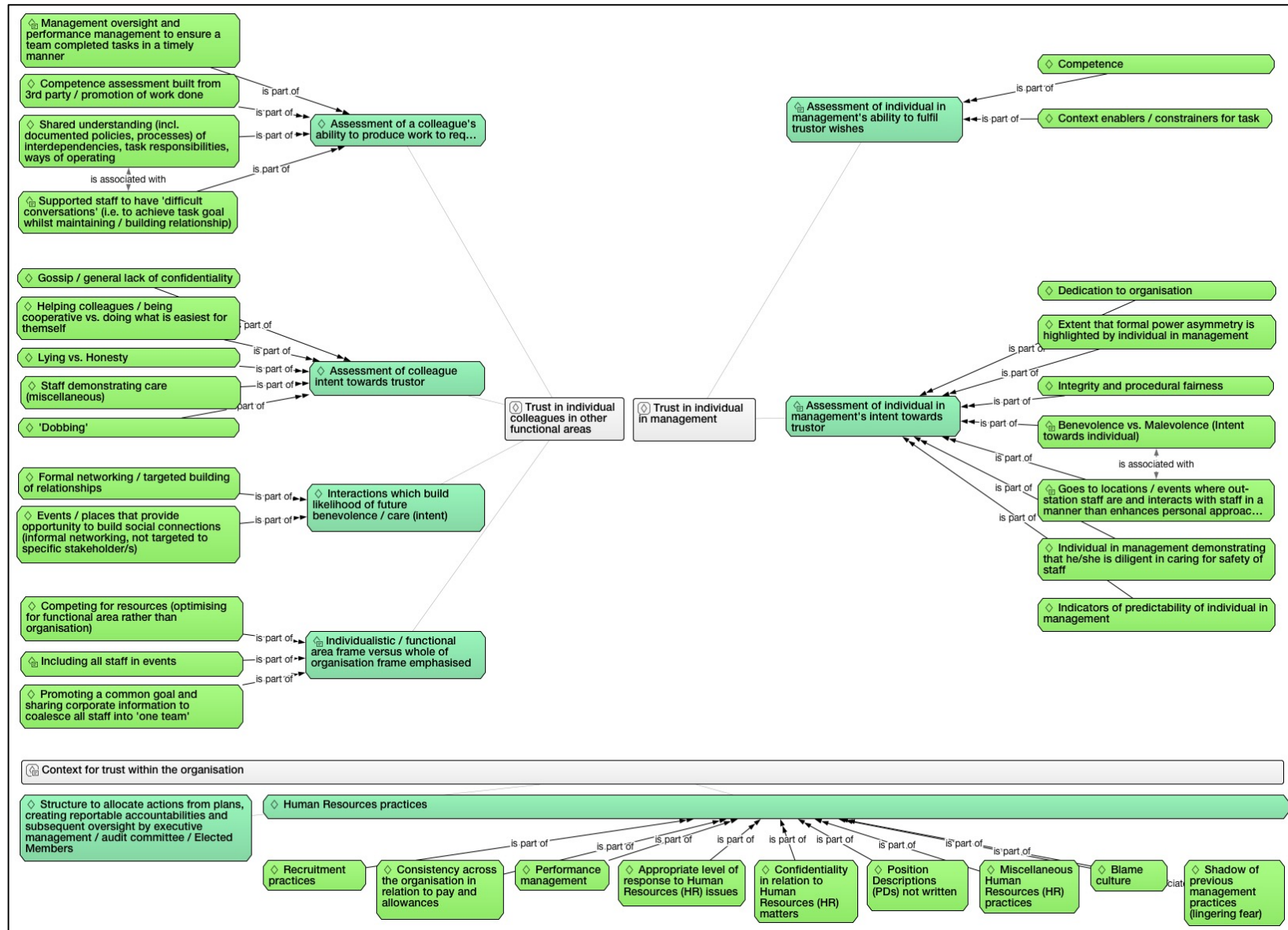


Figure 4.27 All themes, concepts and categories for elements of organisational structure impacting on trust between staff (RO3)

4.6 Theme: Trust in an Individual in a Management Role

Two concepts were located under this theme, which broke down into 10 categories (see Figure 4.80).

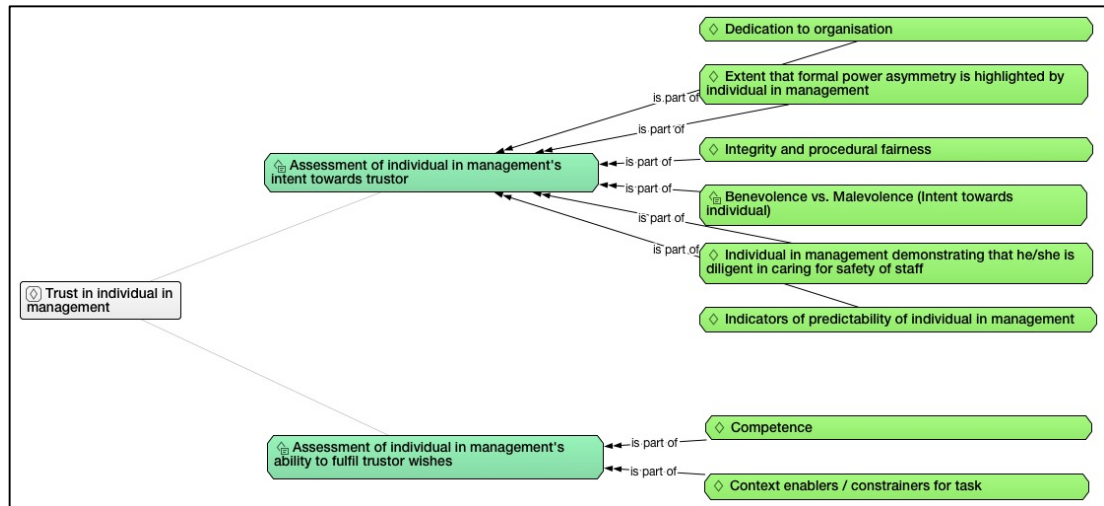


Figure 4.28 Concepts and categories under RO3 'trust in an individual in a management role' theme (ATLAS.ti network view)

4.6.1 Concept: Assessment of intent of an individual in a management role towards trustor

Six categories were located under this concept (see Figure 4.81).

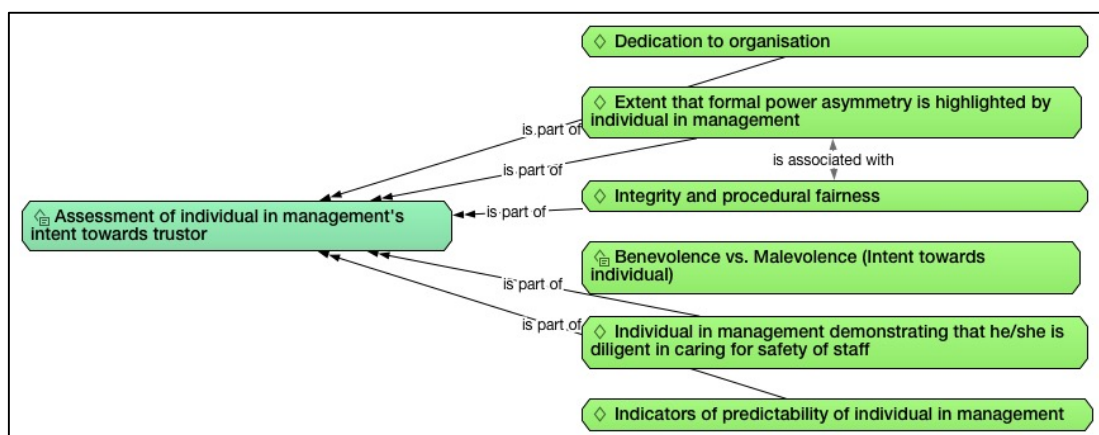


Figure 4.29 Categories under RO3 concept 'assessment of intent of an individual in a management role towards trustor' (ATLAS.ti network view)

Sections 4.6.1.1 to 4.6.2.4

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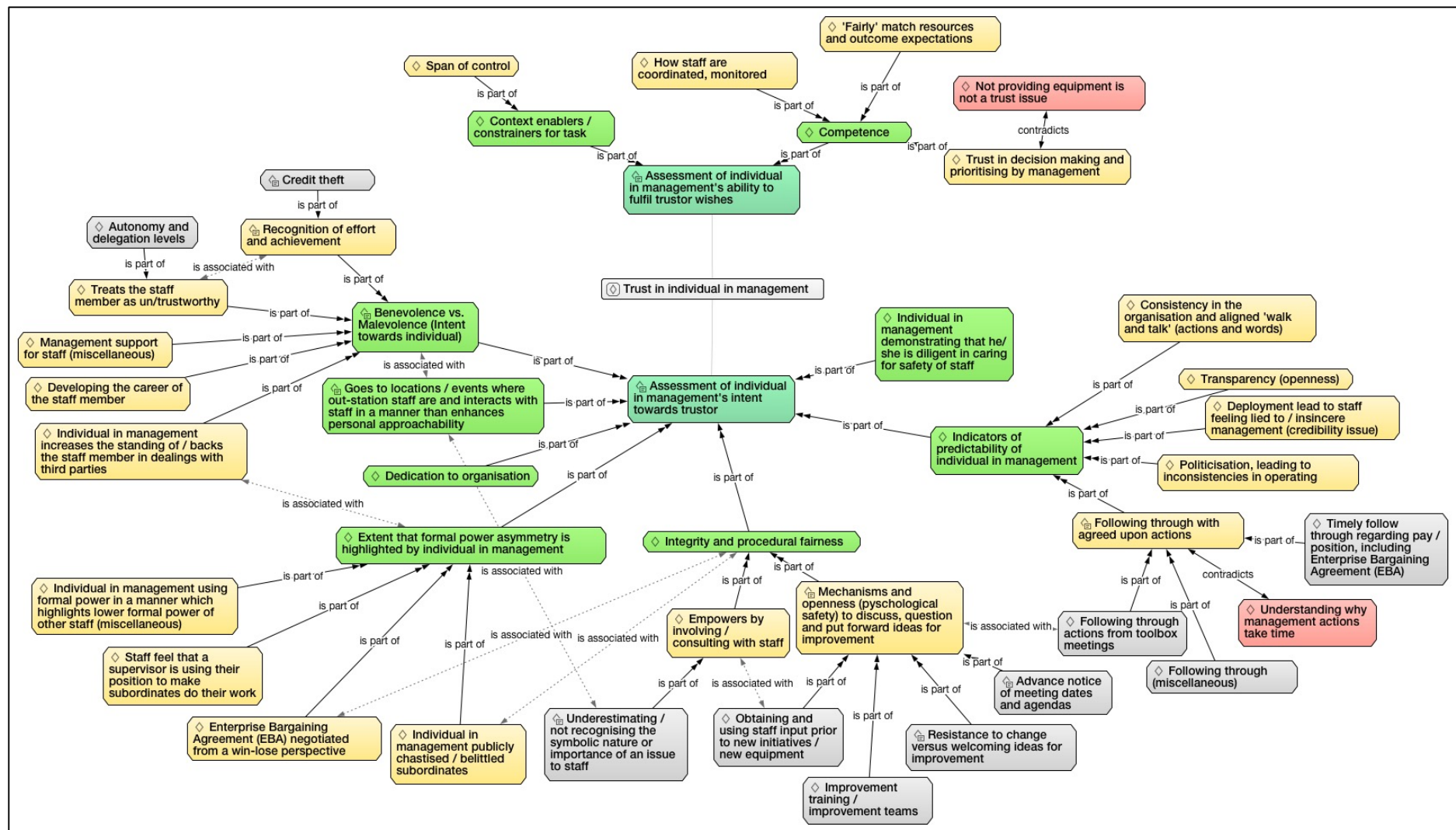


Figure 4.30 All concepts, categories and sub-categories under RO3 theme 'Trust in an individual in a management role' (ATLAS.ti network view)

4.6.2 Comparison of RO1a and RO3

It became evident through the analysis that there were many similarities between the categories for trust in a participant's direct supervisor and trust in an individual in a management role, yet subtle interesting differences, as noted below.

Consistency

It was primarily the supervisor being consistent over time and across subordinates that was salient to trust in the direct supervisor. However, for an individual in upper management, consistency with the organisation's position and messages was salient.

Empathy and care/caring for safety

Perhaps reflecting a closer dyadic relationship, participants believed trust in direct supervisors to be impacted by broader considerations of empathy and care, whereas for an individual in a management role, it was simply care for the safety of the participant that was salient.

Being approachable

It is perhaps intuitive, but still instructive for management practice, that for individuals in upper management to be approachable requires the individual to lower the power distance by going to where staff are located and interacting with staff. Direct supervisors however do not face this as they tend to interact with their direct subordinates as an inherent part of their role. Regardless of the level, however, the manner in which a direct supervisor or person in upper management interacted with staff influenced whether staff felt that person was approachable, thereby impacting upon trust in that individual.

Table 4.6 Comparison of trust impacting categories between direct supervisor and individual in a management role

Category	Subcategories for RO1a: Behaviours by a direct supervisor which impacted upon the trust of direct subordinate	Category	Subcategories for RO3: Behaviours by an individual in a management (mgmt.) role which impacted upon the trust of a staff member
Concept: Intent to perform task important to the trustor			
Benevolence/ malevolence (intent towards individual)	Treats subordinate as an un/trustworthy person	Benevolence/ malevolence (intent towards individual)	Treats the member of staff as un/trustworthy
	Supervisor increases the standing of / backs the subordinate in dealings with third parties		Individual in a mgmt role increases the standing of / backs the staff member in dealings with third parties
	Empathy and care		n/a
	Supervisor support (miscellaneous)		Management support (miscellaneous)
	n/a		Developing the career of the staff member
	n/a		Recognition of effort and achievement
	n/a		Individual in a management role demonstrating diligence in caring for the safety of staff
Dedication to team/ organisation (intent towards individual as a member of a wider group)	Supervisor is conscientious in their own work	Dedication to team/ org. (intent towards indiv. as a member of a wider group)	Dedication to organisation
	Extent that formal power asymmetry is highlighted by supervisor		Extent that formal power asymmetry is highlighted by the individual in a management role
	Supervisor is approachable/gives subordinate their time		Goes to locations/events where out-station staff are and interacts with staff in a manner that enhances personal approachability
	Supervisor enacts interdependence of achievement and accountability		n/a
	Supervisor listens to understand		n/a
Integrity and procedural fairness (intent towards anyone)	Empowers by involving/consulting with subordinate	Integrity and procedural fairness (intent towards anyone)	Empowers by involving/consulting with staff
	Keeps a confidence		n/a (although confidentiality a sub-category under organisational context impacting trust)
	Fairness and resolution when issues with subordinate occur		n/a (although procedural fairness a category under organisational context impacting trust)
	Acceptability/alignment of values		n/a
	Conflict avoidance		n/a
	n/a		Mechanisms and openness (psychological safety) to discuss, question and put forward ideas for improvement
Indicators of predictability	Transparency (openness): quantity of information	Indicators of predictability	Transparency (openness): quantity of information
	Honesty/lying: quality of information		Deployment lead to staff feeling lied to/insincere mgmt.
	Supervisor consistent		Consistency in the organisation and aligned 'walk and talk': quality of information
	Supervisor clear in their expectations/direction		n/a
	Following through with agreed upon actions		Following through with agreed upon actions
	n/a		Politicisation, leading to inconsistencies in operating
Concept: Ability to perform task important to the trustor			
Competence	Gives sound (work related) advice	Competence	n/a
	n/a		How staff are coordinated, monitored
	n/a		Span of control
	n/a		'Fairly' match resources and outcome expectations
	n/a		Trust in decision making and prioritising by mgmt.

4.7 Theme: Trust in Colleagues in Other Functional Areas

Four concepts were located under this theme, which broke down into 14 categories (see Figure 4.123).

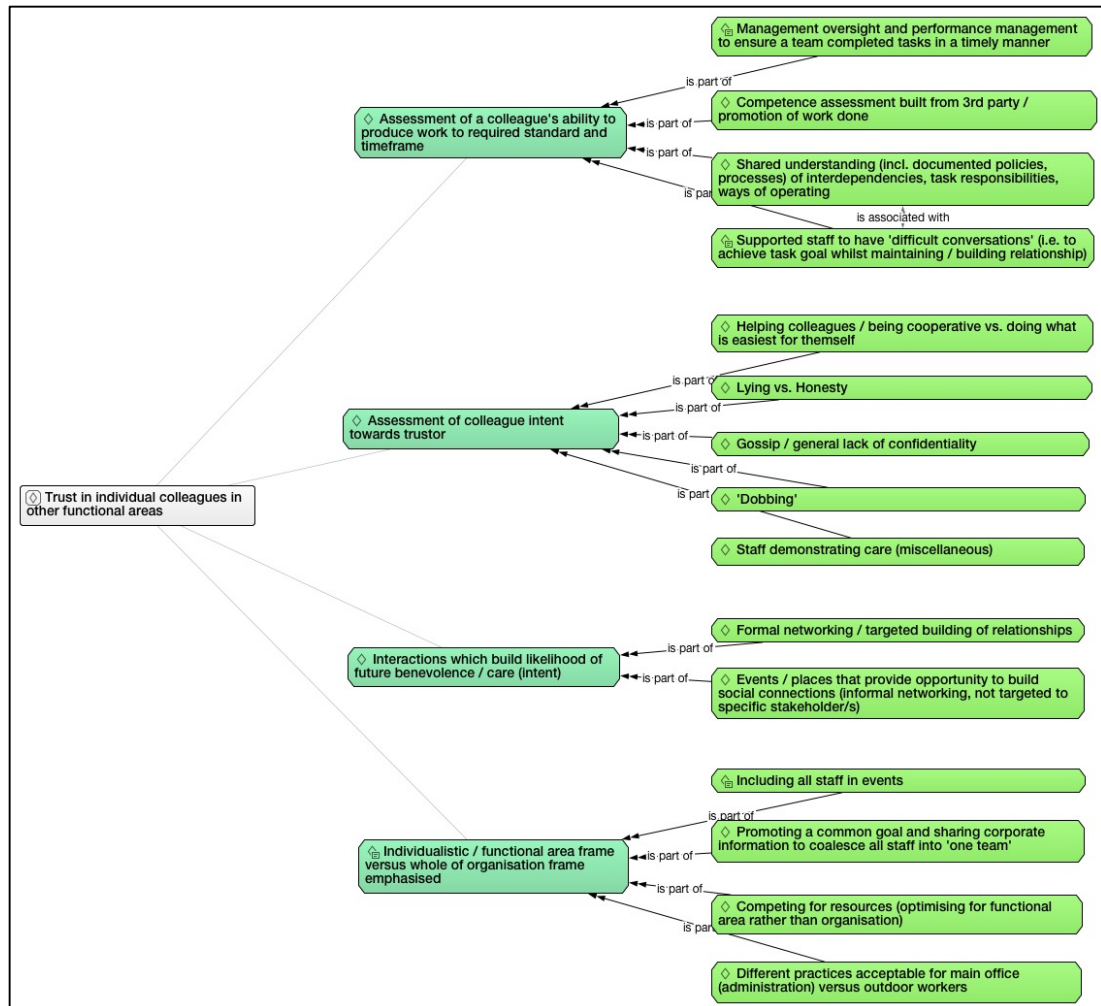


Figure 4.31 Concepts and categories under RO3 theme 'trust in colleagues in other functional areas' (ATLAS.ti network view)

4.7.1 Concept: Assessment of a colleague's ability to produce work to required standard and timeframe

This concept encompassed four categories (see Figure 4.124).

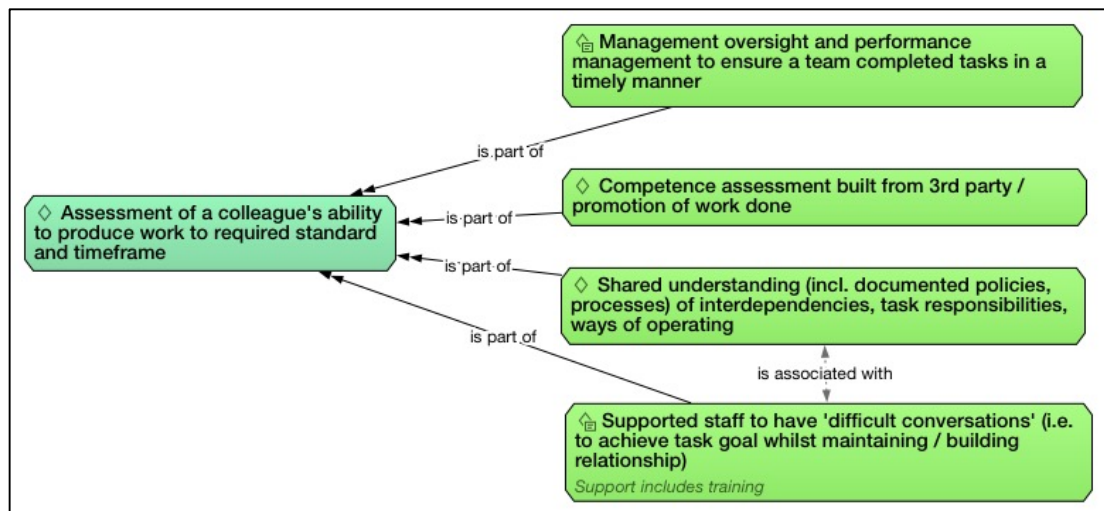


Figure 4.32 Categories under RO3 concept: ‘assessment of a colleague’s ability to produce work to required standard and time frame’

Sections 4.7.1.1 to 4.7.3.2

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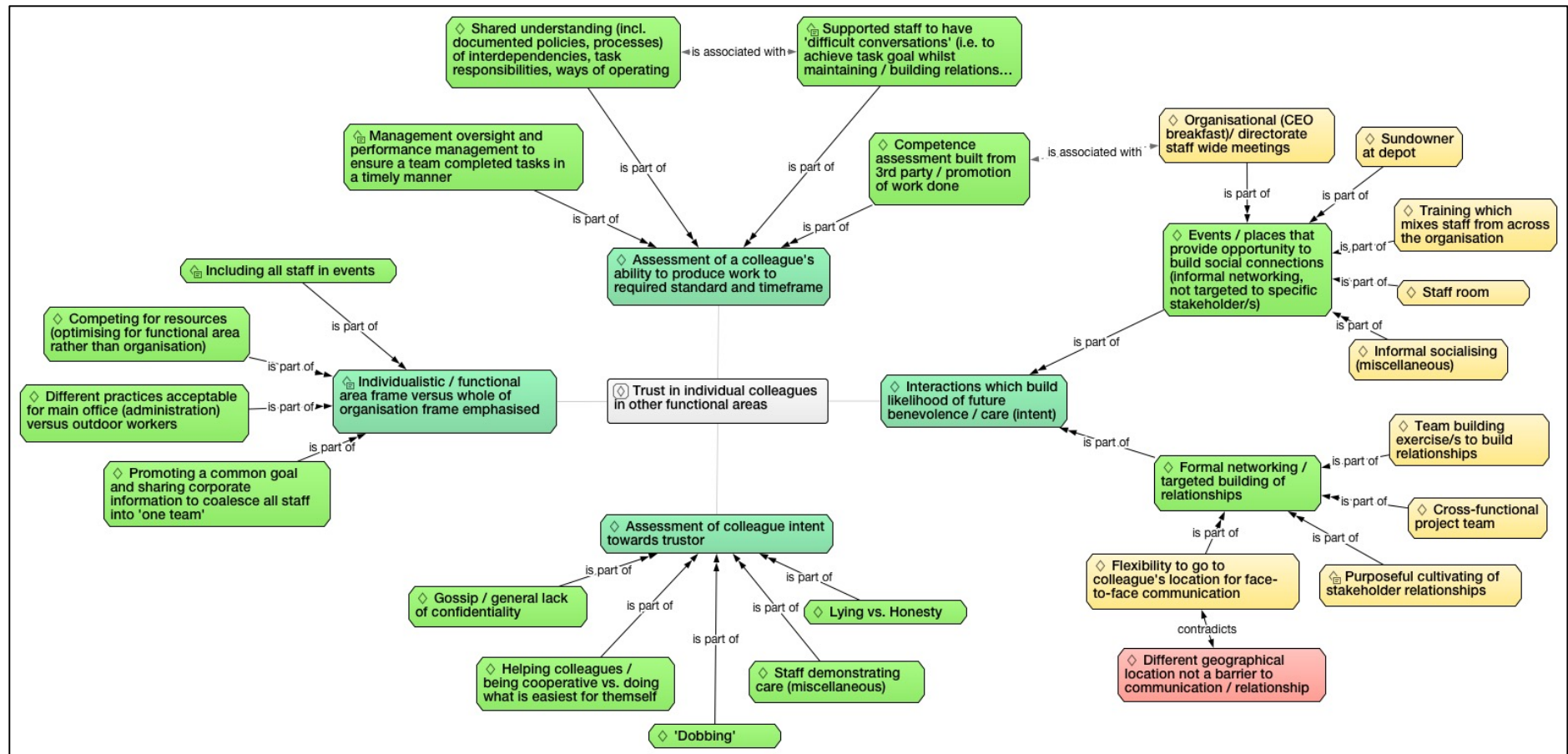


Figure 4.33 All concepts, categories and sub-categories under the RO3 theme 'Trust in individual colleagues in other functional areas' (ATLAS.ti network view)

4.8 Theme: Context for Trust within the Organisation

The data indicated two main mechanisms via which the context (organisational structures) impacted trust in:

- a staff member's trust in a colleague from a different functional area;
- an individual in a management role; or
- trust in management (as the body responsible for creating and upholding these organisational structures) as a whole.

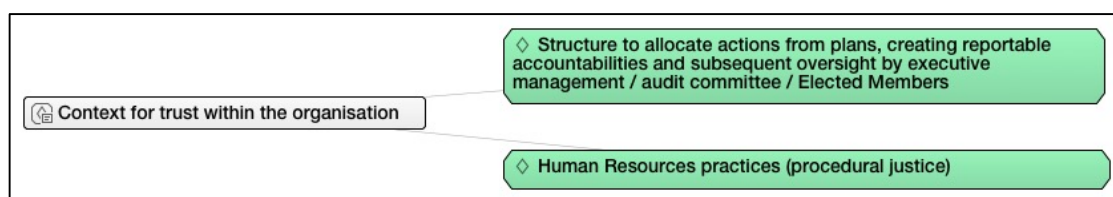


Figure 4.34 Categories under theme 'context for trust within the organisation'

Sections 4.8.1 to 4.9.1.8

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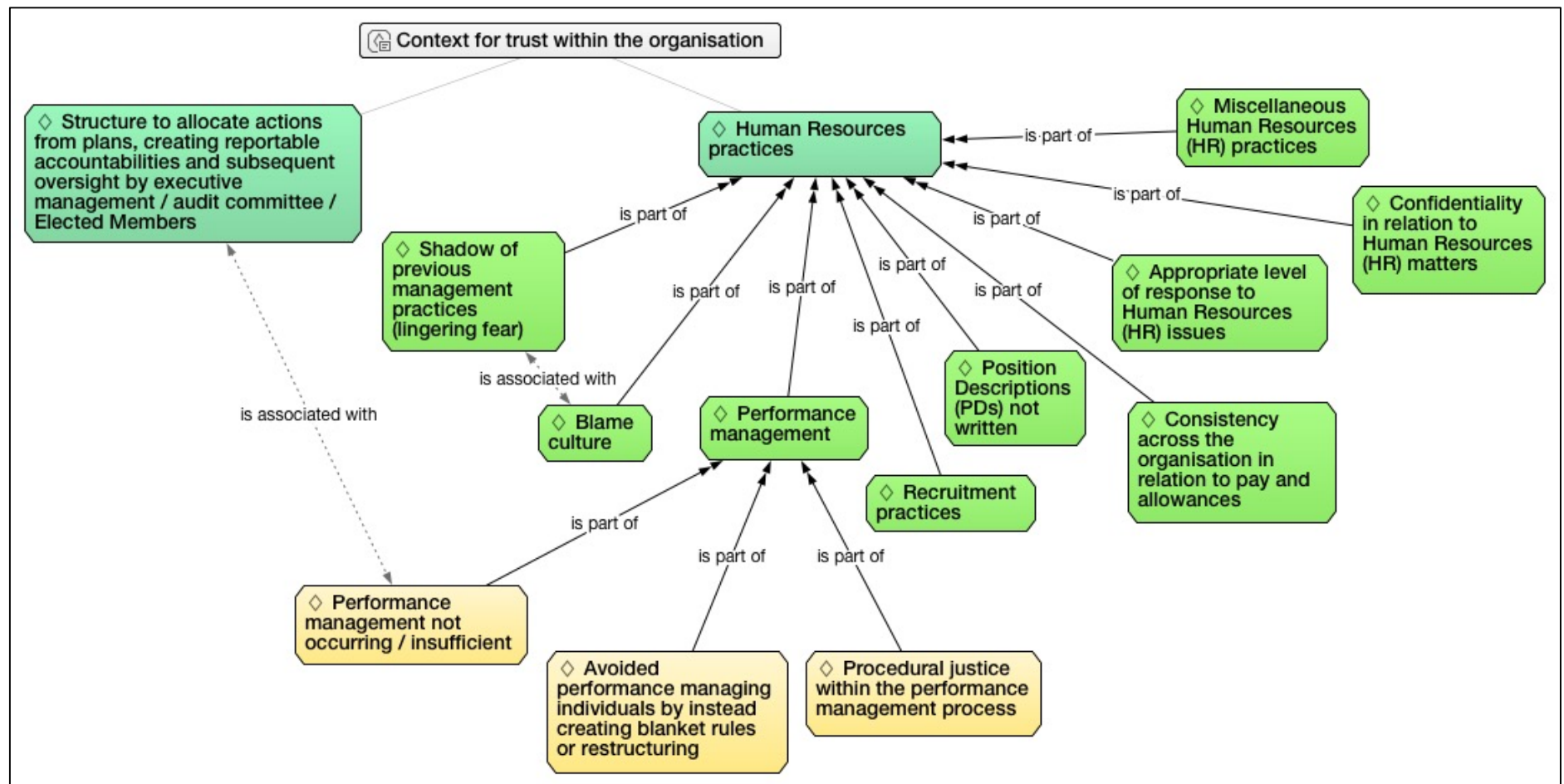


Figure 4.35 All concepts, categories and sub-categories under RO3 theme 'Context for trust within the organisation' (ATLAS.ti network view)

Chapter 5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the findings of this study, including extensive use of quotations (codes) from the research participants. This present chapter expands upon these findings by comparing the findings to the extant trust literature. Those findings that extend or challenge the literature are then expounded in more detail, drawing upon relevant research outside the field of trust.

A limitation of this study was its bounded nature, as a small qualitative exploratory study. However, the advantage of the study design was that it produced valuable insights to direct future trust research. Embedded in the chapter are the five key contributions to the body of knowledge, as listed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Key contributions of this study to the trust literature

1. A tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust.
2. The novel twin concepts of ‘satisfied trust’ and ‘alert trust’. These differentiate between expected permanence of trust (from the trustor’s perspective).

‘Satisfied trust’ exists where a trustor is comfortable that the current assessment of trust dynamics is stable and durable and thus the trust will remain in its current state. In contrast, ‘alert trust’ exists where trust (willing vulnerability) co-exists with trustor uncertainty whether the perceived trust antecedents may change, and thus the trustor is alert for signals which may alter future levels of trust depending upon whether trust is reassured or alternatively, suspicions confirmed and the level of trust declines.
3. Identification of the circumstances in which lack of competence does not decrease trust, including the salience of stability to trust assessments.
4. Identification of a difference between a trust antecedent for blue- and white-collar subordinate trust in a supervisor.
5. Novel concept of ‘nested benevolence’ as a descriptor for a trustor assessing another party’s intent towards herself as (i) an individual, (ii) a group of which she is a member, and (iii) from how the trustor trusts all individuals.

Important contributions of this study to the trust literature were the novel findings regarding the under-researched area of blue-collars workers. Also emanating from this study was a special case of causal attributions in relation to trust building and trust maintenance. Counter-intuitively, and not found in the extant trust literature, the data indicated that a lack of competence did not negatively impact trust if the trustor perceived that *competence was improving* (unstable) and *attributed the lack of competence to factors external to the trustee*, rather than lack of effort, which is an internal attribution.

Thus, attribution theory, which explains and predicts the way individuals ascribe causes to failures and success and encompasses the notions of stability and locus of causality (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1986), proved to be relevant to the findings of this study.

Attribution theory also explained the finding that a subordinate's trust was impacted to the extent that a subordinate attributed internal or external reasons for the supervisor failing to fulfil the subordinate's request. External factors, such as competing demands and heavy workload (external attributions), partly ameliorated the negative impact upon trust when a supervisor failed to complete the requested task.

Further examination found that the well-established attribution theory constructs of stability and locus of causality were comprehensively salient to all data regarding the building, retention and loss of trust. In this manner, a theoretical basis with explanatory power was identified.

It is noted that while trust antecedents within existing relationships often equate to the *trustworthiness traits* of a trustee (Colquitt et al., 2007), causal ascriptions such as stability and locus of causality are drawn against *outcomes* (Weiner, 1986). Thus, this study extends understanding of how trust assessments are formed and, in addition, expands attribution theory through these findings. Such theory integration advances both fields (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011).

Collectively, the extant trust literature, findings from the present study and attribution theory have led to the development of a coherent, parsimonious but tentative 'Stability Contingent Model' of trust. The four elements identified – the established trust antecedents from the trust literature of (1) competence and (2) benevolent intent, and

attribution theory's elements of (3) stability and (4) locus of causality (which is embedded into competence and intent) – then became the basis of the model.

This tentative model is presented here (Figure 5.1) to presage the supporting evidence and explanation used to arrive at the model.

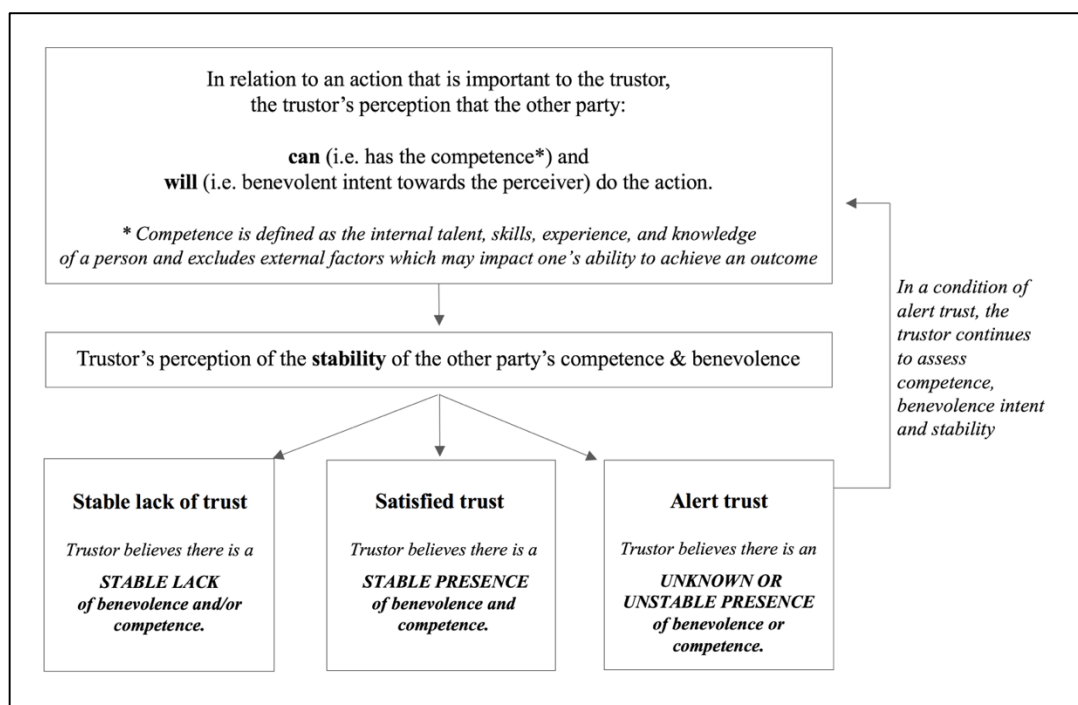


Figure 5.1 Tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust

The structure of this chapter is that each part of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust is highlighted and discussed separately. The discussion commences with a brief comparison of the trust literature with the findings of this study. Findings from this study that support the extant trust literature (i.e. competence and benevolent intent) form the first section of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust, where they are highlighted. However, the discussion in this area is relatively brief given that it supports the current knowledge in the field.

The following sections highlight the elements of the trust model that are novel to the field of trust, being those of attribution theory's dimensions of locus of causality and stability. The discussion in these sections is more in-depth and provides quotations from the data under two broad examples. These quotations serve to support and illustrate this study's tentative model of trust.

The discussion then moves from the trust dynamics contained in the Stability Contingent Model of Trust to the three types of trust outcomes that emerged from the data and are represented in the model. Ten examples emerging from the data support and demonstrate the three types of trust outcomes arising from different combinations of the trust dynamics. These separate examples are then brought together in a summary table for a more holistic overview and illustration of how the tentative trust model operates.

The final sections present three secondary insights from this study's findings, which although not directly contributing to the development of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust are nevertheless important contributions to the literature. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research and a brief summary of the contributions this study makes to the field of trust.

However, before delving into the initial section, which is the comparison of this study's findings with the trust literature, this researcher wishes to advise that the remainder of this thesis will deviate from terminology usually used in the trust literature and indeed, used in previous sections of this thesis which discussed the trust literature. This terminological amendment from 'trust antecedent' to 'trust dynamic' was prompted by the study's findings. 'Antecedent' implies a static, linear connection from trust antecedent to trust consequence. However, the present study's findings highlighted that information was actively and passively obtained and utilised by the trustor *during and throughout* the trust relationship and the *dynamic and ongoing nature* of trust assessments was of high importance.

The fluid and continuous nature of trust assessments has also been highlighted in the literature. For example:

Trust is a **dynamic aspect of human relationships**. It is an ongoing process that must be initiated, maintained, sometimes restored and continuously authenticated. (Flores & Solomon, 1998, p. 206; emphasis in original)

[R]eciprocal trust is a process rather than a construct ... each party is both trustor and trustee and one party's trust may influence the other's and vice versa. (Lyu & Ferrin, 2018, p. 67)

While ‘trust antecedent’, with its linear implication may be appropriate in relation to *generalised trust* (i.e. the default level of trust in strangers) this study’s findings suggest that *within a relationship, perceived intent, competence, locus of causality and stability are dynamically revised and updated* following the receipt of new information. Therefore, the data of this study, and those scholars who have emphasised the dynamic and ongoing nature of trust – such as in the writings of Flores & Solomon (1998), Lyu & Ferrin (2018) and the trust model of Mayer et al. (1995) – suggest that *within an existing relationship*, ‘trust dynamic’ better conveys the dynamism involved. This also provides a clearer contrast with generalised trust (trust in strangers), where there is in fact a static ‘trust antecedent’ judgement.

5.2 Discussion of Each Section of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

5.2.1 Section of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust which aligns with the trust literature

The extant literature conceptualises the broad dynamics of interpersonal trust as two causally connected, but distinct dimensions: (i) the belief in the *trustworthy intentions* of another party (otherwise referred to in the literature as ‘benevolence’ and ‘affect-based trust’) and (ii) the confidence and reliance in the other party’s *ability* to achieve the desired outcome (cognition-based trust) (Cook & Wall; 1980, McAllister, 1995; Sitkin & Roth, 1993).

Analysis of this study’s data strongly supports these two dimensions. Accordingly, these have been included in the Stability Contingent Model of Trust, as shown in Figure 5.2.

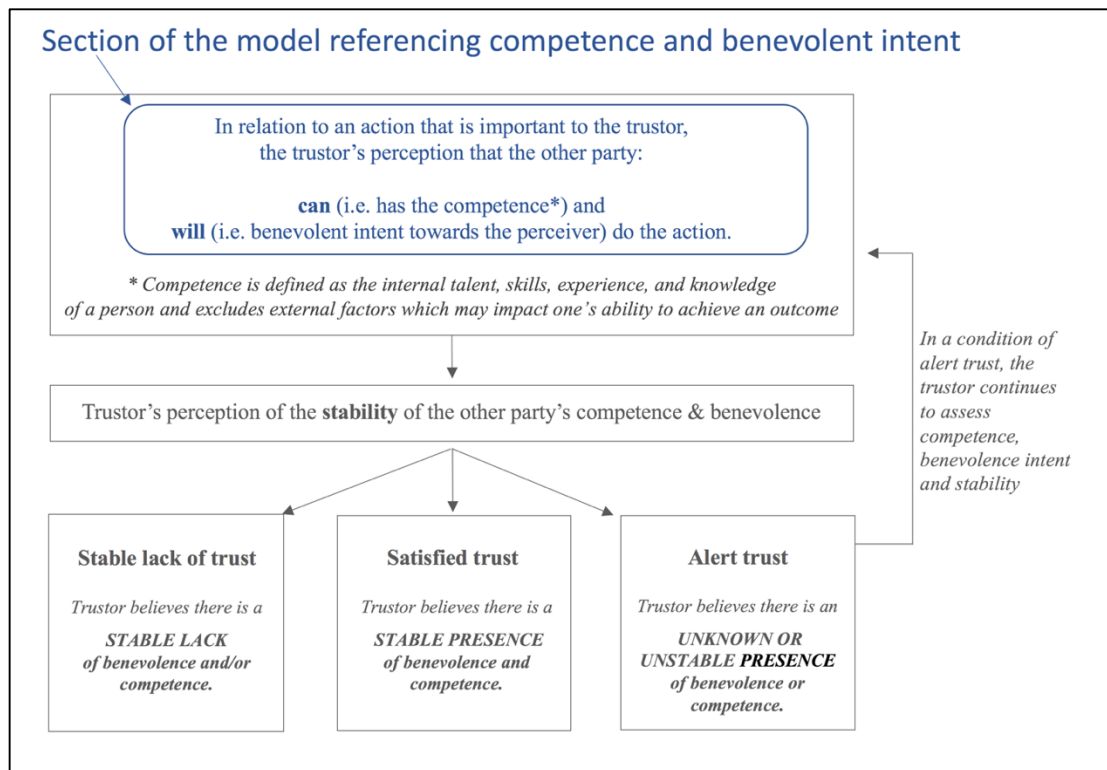


Figure 5.2 Stability Contingent Model of Trust, highlighting competence and benevolent intent section

However, this study found that two well-established dimensions from attribution theory, locus of causality and stability, were also salient. The comparison of this study's findings (benevolent intent, competence, locus of causality and stability) and the trust literature is shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Trust dimensions with tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust

	TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAITS FROM TRUST LITERATURE		CAUSAL DIMENSIONS FROM ATTRIBUTION THEORY	
Description in relation to a trust assessment	Benevolent intent	Competence	Locus of causality (Internal/External continuum)	Stability (Stable/Temporary continuum)
Measure (from the perspective of the trustor)	<i>Degree to which the potential trustee is perceived to have benevolent desire to benefit the trustor</i>	<i>Degree to which the trust target is perceived as possessing internal competence (talent, skills, experience, knowledge) to successfully achieve the outcome</i>	<i>Degree to which success or failure in achieving an outcome is perceived to be due to internal or external factors</i>	<i>Degree to which the success or failure to achieve an outcome is perceived as stable (as the future is perceived as likely to be consistent with past outcomes if a stable attribution)</i>
Convergence with dimensions from trust literature	<p><i>Benevolence</i> Mayer et al., 1995; Nooteboom, 2002; Six, 2003; Six, 2005; Wasti et al., 2011</p> <p><i>Motives and intentions</i> Gabarro, 1978</p> <p><i>Loyalty</i> Gabarro, 1978; Butler, 1991; Clark & Payne, 1997</p> <p><i>Affect-based trust</i> McAllister, 1995</p>	<p><i>Ability</i> Mayer et al., 1995; Six, 2003; Six, 2005; Wasti et al., 2011</p> <p><i>Competence</i> Gabarro, 1978; Butler, 1991; Nooteboom, 2002; Mishra, 1996; Clark & Payne, 1997</p> <p><i>Technically competent performance</i> Barber, 1983</p>	<p><i>Locus of Causality</i> In relation to loss of trust: Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009</p>	<p><i>The below dimensions from the literature only identify stability as supporting trust, whereas the present study indicates a lack of stability can support trust (when in combination with current lack of competence and an external causal attribution)</i></p> <p><i>Persistence and fulfilment</i> Barber, 1983</p> <p><i>Integrity</i> Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995; Clark and Payne, 1997; Wasti et al., 2011</p> <p><i>Dedication</i> Nooteboom, 2002; Six, 2003; Six, 2005</p> <p><i>Consistency</i> Gabarro, 1978; Butler, 1991; Mishra, 1996</p>

5.2.2 Section of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust relating to attribution theory concepts (locus of causality and stability)

As discussed in the data-directed literature in Chapter 2, attribution theory relates to the process of ascribing causes to events (Heider, 1958), or as Graham (1991) succinctly phrases it, answering ‘why’ questions. Two well-established causal dimensions offered by attribution theory were relevant to the data of this study (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Causal dimensions applicable to trust assessments

Causal dimension	Description
Locus of causality (Heider, 1958; Kent & Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1979)	The internal/external continuum
Stability (Kent & Martinko, 1995; Weiner et al., 1971)	The stable/temporary continuum

There is strong alignment between attribution theory and the development and loss of trust, not just from the data of the present study, but from fundamental tenets of attribution theory.

- Attribution theory pertains to situations of success or failure to achieve outcomes (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1986)
- Attribution theory posits that individuals make attributions to facilitate a perception of order rather than uncertainty (Graham, 1991) and predict others’ future actions (Heider, 1958) and thus direct one’s future behaviour (Clifford, 2009; Weiner et al., 1971).
- Similarly, trust scholars have expressed that the function of trust is to reduce complexity and enhance prediction (Lewis & Weigert, 1985a; Luhmann, 1979/2017)

Attribution theory claims that individuals use heuristics (mental shortcuts) to reduce complexity. These heuristics (which, in the case of trust, are causal ascriptions) used by an individual to explain task success or failure and from these perceptions, predict another party’s actions. Given these striking similarities, the question may be raised why attribution theory has not been relied upon previously in development of holistic trust models.

Applying attribution theory to a different aspect of trust, Tomlinson and Mayer (2009) theorised that attributional theory was relevant to loss of trust (which they focused on as loss is a precursor to trust repair actions). In their article, they also expressed surprise at the ‘lack of attention in the trust repair literature to Weiner’s (1986) attribution theory’ (p. 90). Tomlinson and Mayer developed a model (shown at Figure 5.3) of the events and attributions they theorised would occur following a negative outcome of a trust event.

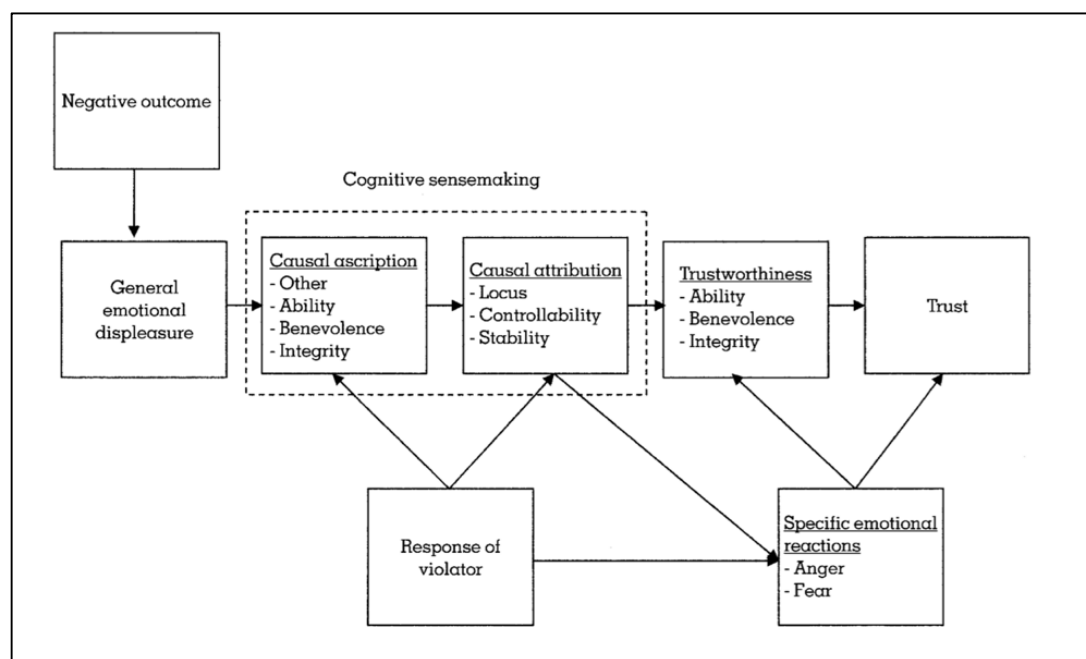


Figure 5.3 Tomlinson and Mayer’s Causal Attribution Model of Trust Repair
(Tomlinson & Mayer, 2009, p. 89. Reprinted with permission from the Academy of Management)

While both the present study and Tomlinson and Mayer’s (2009) study utilise attribution theory, there are differences. The present study applies attribution theory to an increase *and* decrease of trust levels. However, Tomlinson and Mayer’s theorised model pertains only to loss of trust. As discussed in Chapter 2, there is scholarly controversy over whether trust and distrust are different constructs. Therefore, this disparity in application of attribution theory to situations of trust and situations of loss of trust is potentially significant. The absence of attribution theory in the trust literature is still evident, as in a later review of trust research, Tomlinson (2018) asserted; ‘I did not find any trust development research that invoked Weiner’s attribution theory’ (p. 256).

Another difference is that the model that Tomlinson and Mayer put forward was based on theorising rather than on evidence based research. It is noted that their model shows three causal attributions (locus of causality, controllability and stability) whereas the data of this study indicated that two causal attributions (locus of causality and stability) were sufficient to explain all of the data. However, this may be because the present study is a small study, and so data relating to the combination of internal locus of causality, uncontrollability and stability (such as if a subordinate was perceived as not being able to achieve competence as the task also required some natural talent) did not arise. This is noted later in the thesis as an area for future research.

In addition, the model developed by Tomlinson and Mayer was based on the trustee traits in Mayer et al.'s (1995) trust model of 'ability, benevolence, integrity'. However, the present study found the 'integrity' trait to be redundant in explanations of trust assessments as the 'stability' causal attribution was sufficient. Additionally, the stability continuum provided for the situation where lack of stability supported trust (in relation in improving competence), whereas 'integrity' has been discussed in the literature as being positively correlated with trust, and so overlooks the trusting situation explained by a lack of stability.

A further difference is that Tomlinson and Mayer's (2009) model implicates strong affective responses (anger and fear). However, the data in the present study pertaining to attribution theory's stability and locus of causality constructs illustrated that trustors may be analytical rather than incurring a strong affective response, as predicted by Tomlinson and Mayer's (2009) trust model. This lack of affective response is illustrated in the following quotations from supervisors.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

In other research, Dirks et al. (2011) conducted experiments to understand how behaviours (e.g. penance and apologies) may contribute to trust repair. While attribution theory was not a major focus of their study, they did refer to attribution theory as explanation for the finding that ‘individuals do not have to directly experience a [trust] violation in order to form impressions of another individual, including those related to trust’ (p. 93).

Both studies support the applicability of attribution theory specifically to trust repair. The present thesis, however, contends that attribution theory has wider application to trusting relationships. Other notable differences include: (1) the finding that controllability and integrity are redundant, with the four trust dimensions of benevolent intent, competence, locus of causality and stability sufficient to explain and predict trust assessments, and (2) a strong emotive response (anger and fear) was not necessarily invoked.

The following two sub-sections discusses the two attribution theory dimensions (locus of causality and stability) in relation to the trust dynamics in the extant literature and this study’s Stability Contingent Model of Trust.

5.2.2.1 Locus of causality

As articulated by Mayer et al. (1995) in their meta-analysis, the trust literature represents benevolent intent and competence as a ‘characteristics of the trustor’. As a characteristic of the individual, it may be considered that an internal locus of causality is already built into the benevolent intent and competence trust dynamics. However, the trust model developed in this study makes the ‘locus of causality’ dynamic explicit (see Figure 5.4).

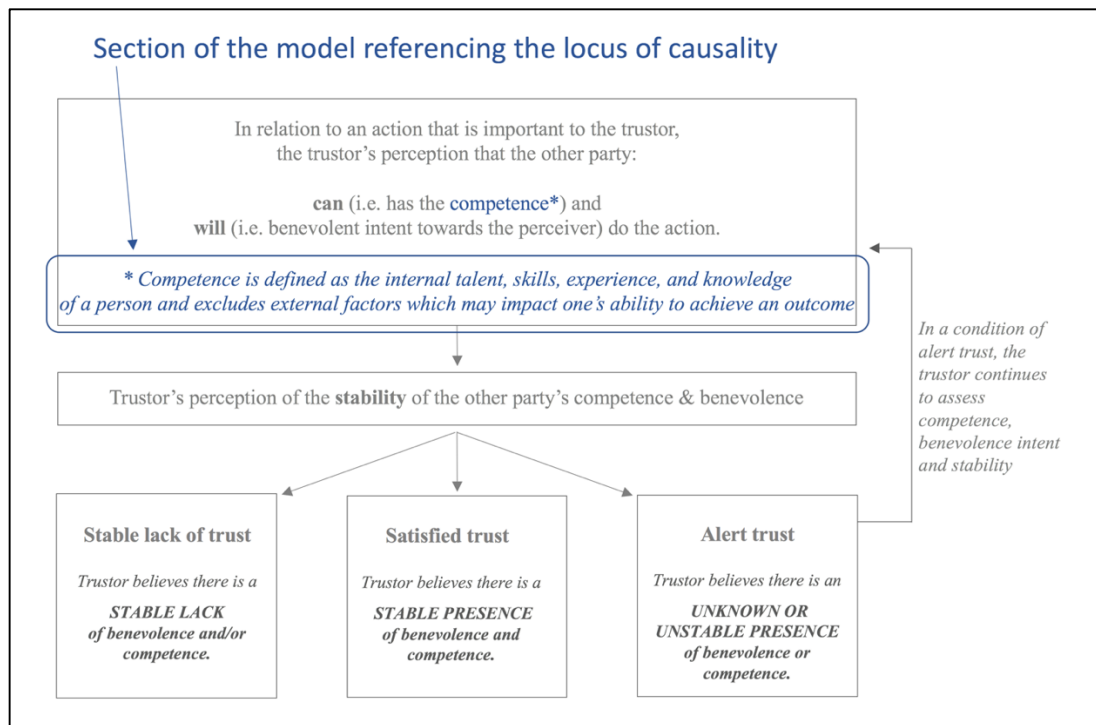


Figure 5.4 Stability Contingent Model of Trust, highlighting locus of causality section

In the literature, benevolent intent appears to be commonly understood as being inherent to the trustor. However, the dictionary definition of ability (which is often how the trust literature refers to competence) indicates that ability can be thought of more broadly to be inclusive of the external context. For example, ability has been defined as the ‘power or capacity to do or act physically, mentally, legally, morally, financially, etc.’ (www.dictionary.com/browse/ability). It was, therefore, considered appropriate to make the internal locus of control explicit, specifically in relation to the competence/ability trust dynamic.

5.2.2.2 Stability

This study's trust dynamic of ‘stability’ had some similarity with the trust literature's concept of ‘integrity’. Mayer et al.'s (1995) oft-cited ‘ability, integrity, benevolence’ trust model defines integrity as ‘the trustor's perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable’ (p. 719). However, in relation to trust models, scholars have described integrity as problematic, given that it is a subjective concept with multiple meanings (Clark & Payne, 1997; Levine & Schweitzer, 2015).

Although there is some overlap with benevolent intent, the dynamics from the trust literature that may be considered under the broad banner of integrity are:

- honesty (Gabarro, 1978; Muethel & Hoegl, 2012)
- consistency (Butler, 1991; Gabarro, 1978; Mishra, 1996); and
- reliability/dependability (Butler, 1991; McAllister, 1995; Mishra, 1996; Muethel & Hoegl, 2012; Wasti et al., 2011).

Taken together, these trust literature concepts of integrity, honesty, consistency and reliability may be considered to have a relationship with the trust dynamic of stability. Importantly however, the literature only refers to consistency (stability) as increasing trust, whereas the present study indicates a temporary ('unstable') attribution supports trust in particular circumstances, i.e. (1) the trustor is not currently competent; however, the trustor expects the lack of competence is temporary, or (2) the failure of a supervisor to consistently complete requested tasks is attributed to external reasons. There is, as far as this researcher is aware, no corresponding situation in the literature wherein *lack* of integrity, *lack* of honesty, *lack* of consistency or *lack* of reliability towards the trustor was supportive of trust.

Thus, while the literature indicates consistency (stability) increases trust, this study reveals the circumstances, and provides a theoretical grounding (attribution theory) for when both stability *and lack of stability* support trust.

Driven by this study's data, attribution theory's stability continuum (stable/temporary) was therefore included in the trust model which emerged from the present research (see Figure 5.5).

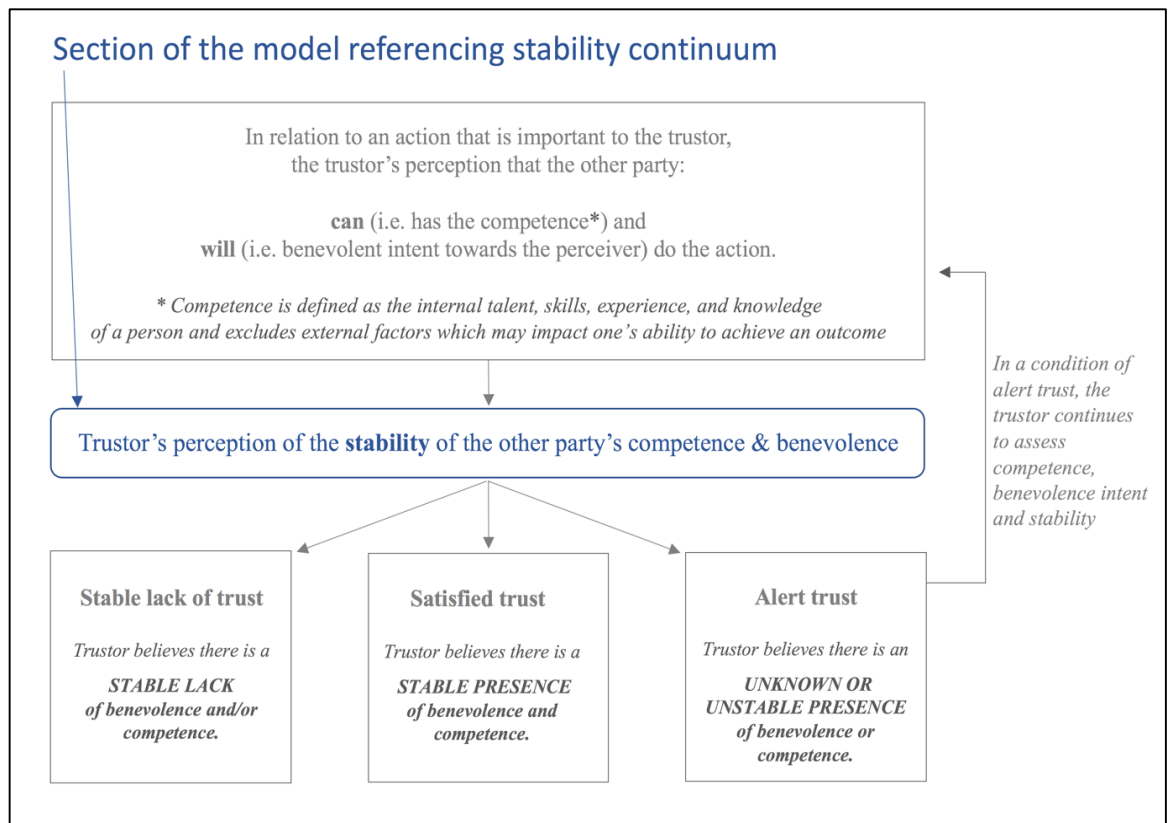


Figure 5.5 Stability Contingent Model of Trust, highlighting stability section

5.2.2.3 Examples of 'locus of causality' and 'stability' in trust assessments

In the following sections, examples of the data will be given to illustrate how locus of causality and stability inform trust assessments. These examples also illustrate the gap in the trust literature in terms of being able to explain this study's data indicating that a *lack* of competence, *lack* of consistency and *lack* of reliability did not lower trust in the context of perceived instability and/or external causality.

In the first example (sub-section 5.2.3.3.1), the trustees had a current lack of competence. In the second example (sub-section 5.2.3.3.2), the trustees lacked consistency and reliability.

5.2.2.3.1 This study's novel finding that a subordinate not being currently competent did not necessarily result in lowered trust

There appears to be universal academic consensus that competence is a trust dynamic. This is also supported by the present study. However, a striking aspect of the present

study is the finding of support *and contradiction* that competence is a trust dynamic for supervisor trust in a direct subordinate.

The data revealed a novel finding for interpersonal trust dynamics, namely, that a subordinate's current lack of competence did not result in lowered trust by the direct supervisor, *as long as the supervisor perceived the subordinate had the ability to grow in competence over time, and the lack of competence was attributed to an external cause*. An important contribution of this study is thus the finding that stability and locus of control are key trust dynamics. This is illustrated in the following examples from the data.

Examples of lowered trust due to a perceived stable lack of competence, and internal attribution (laziness):

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Examples where trust was not lowered despite a current lack of competence, as the supervisor perceived the competence was unstable (would improve):

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The data in this study identified the external causes of a subordinate not having the competence to independently complete a task as including financial resources, staffing resources and lack of appropriate training. These are situational factors, features of the environment and thus external to the subordinate and in the terminology of attribution theory, an external locus of causality (Heider, 1958; Kent & Martinko, 1995; Weiner, 1979).

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

For these supervisors, lack of competence was not perceived to be the subordinate's 'fault'. Instead, the hiring of staff who were less qualified than desirable was an acknowledged method employed by the organisation in the face of financial constraints.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Kahneman and Miller (2003) assert that a lack of surprise is indicative that an event is perceived as a 'normal' occurrence. The data in this study pertinent to a subordinate's lack of competence in a particular domain was characterised by a lack of surprise. The one exception was from an employee new to the organisation who was offered a role in an area she had no experience in.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

In addition to locus of causality, the findings indicated that the stability attributional dimension was also important. Participant data indicated that in the context of this study, competence was perceived as mutable. The below quotation illustrates supervisor trust in a subordinate where the subordinate lacked competence, but an improvement in competence was expected over time (i.e. the current level of competence was considered to be temporary).

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Although it may be counterintuitive that a supervisor trusted a subordinate despite a lack of competence, the temporal frame these supervisors appear to have taken was a

long-term perspective. Future competence as well as present competence was considered in trust assessments.

Taking a longer-term perspective aligns with the diffuse reciprocity upon which trust is founded, wherein there is expectation that a benefit provided now will be repaid in some indefinite future. Putnam (2000) describes this as altruism in the short term for a self-interested gain in the long term. In the situation of trusting a subordinate not currently competent, but expected to gain competence, diffuse reciprocity equates to a supervisor trusting her subordinate now, with the future repayment by what will then be, a competent subordinate.

The alternative would be for a supervisor to not trust her subordinate. However, a lack of relationship or trust signals (benevolent intent) at the nascent stage of a relationship may create challenges for relationship and trust building at a later date (Kasten, 2018) when the subordinate has become competent.

Supporting the notion that a lack of competence did not necessarily lead to decreased trust in the context of unstable and external attributions, the data indicated the converse was also applicable. When a supervisor perceived a subordinate as not competent, and perceived that this lack of competence was stable, the result was lower supervisor trust in a subordinate. The below quotations were in response to interview questions of regarding what had decreased the participant's trust in her subordinate.

Stable lack of competence with external attribution (changing times):

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Attributing an external cause for a failure to achieve an outcome, according to attribution theory, is likely result in sympathy, pro-social support and helping behaviours rather than blaming or punishment (Green & Mitchell, 1979; Weiner, 1986; Weiner et al., 1971).

Similarly, the data illustrated pro-social supportive behaviour. In situations where an external cause was ascribed to a subordinate's lack of competence and the subordinate

was expected to improve her competence, the supervisor was supportive in teaching and mentoring her subordinate.

Temporary lack of competence:

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Underpinned by the concepts of stability and locus of causality, the trust dynamic, ‘not competent, but expected to improve in competence’ is an original contribution to the trust literature. This newly identified dynamic is an area recommended for future research. Another context where this novel trust dynamic may be relevant, and thus be a fruitful context for future research, is the introduction of new technology to a workplace. It is conjectured that this context may also induce an external and temporary attribution for a lack of competency.

To the best of this researcher’s knowledge, and as also expressed by Tomlinson (2018), Weiner’s attribution theory has not been invoked in the trust literature in relation to supporting trust/trust development. Thus, the present study extends the academic application of attribution theory to explain how trust dynamically changes, including the impact of the environment, offering a model of trust drawing upon attribution theory explaining how trust both increases *and* decreases.

The missing piece of the puzzle determining the applicability of attribution theory was that competence, uniformly considered by scholars as fundamental to interpersonal trust, is not always necessary, as lack of competence may be considered a temporary situation and due to an external cause.

In his seminal work, Heider (1958) noted that behaviours are highly prominent whereas the background context (i.e. the external locus of control in this case) appears less salient and erroneously, is less likely to be noted as a causal attribution. This has been termed the ‘fundamental attribution error’ (Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Ross, 1977).

Another factor that facilitated the present study revealing the primacy of attribution theory to trust, is that context has rarely been studied in conjunction with studying interpersonal trust (De Jong et al., 2017; Six, 2005). Including the context in the scope

of the current research facilitated the identification of the internal/external attributional dimension.

5.2.2.3.2 This study's novel finding that a failure of a supervisor to complete a subordinate's request did not necessarily result in lowered trust

The data of this study indicated that supervisors perceived that a failure to consistently 'follow through' on a subordinate's request would lower a subordinate's trust. However, this study's data regarding actual trust dynamics indicated that this was only partially true. The findings showed that subordinates recognised that other factors may impact upon their supervisor's ability to follow through every time.

As an example, the following data suggested that subordinates perceived a combination of internal *and* external factors as influencing whether their supervisor followed through on their requests. In alignment with attribution theory, the data suggested the subordinate 'blamed' the supervisor, and trust in the supervisor decreased correspondingly to the extent that she believed the supervisor's failure arose from factors within the supervisor's control (i.e. an internal attribution). However, external factors, such as competing demands and heavy workload (external attributions), partly ameliorated the negative impact upon trust when a supervisor failed to follow through.

The quotations are unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

5.2.3 Section of the Stability Contingent Model of Trust relating to the outcomes of trust assessments

The previous sections have discussed the trust dynamics that emerged from the study and were therefore incorporated into the Stability Contingent Model of Trust. This

section (Section 5.2.3) discusses the three types of trust outcomes: stable lack of trust, satisfied trust and alert trust, as highlighted in Figure 5.6.

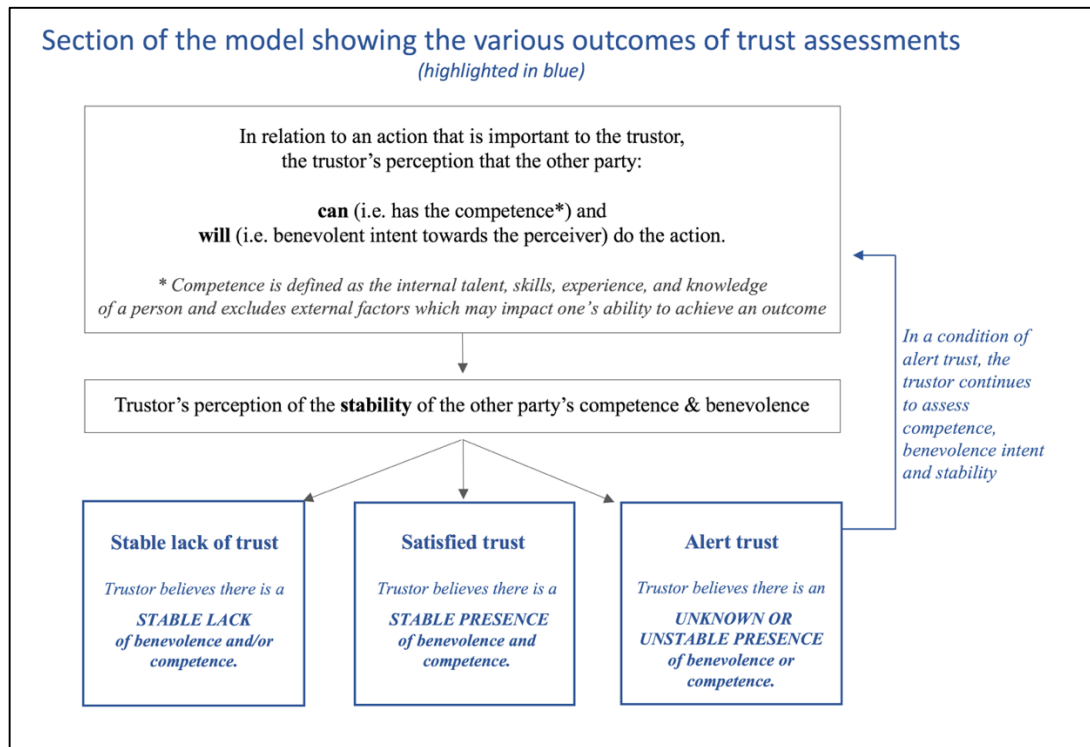


Figure 5.6 Tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust

In this section, examples from the data are given that support and demonstrate the varied trust outcomes resulting from different combinations of the trust dynamics. These separate examples are then brought together in a summary table for a more holistic overview of the tentative trust model. However, it should be noted that as data collection and data analysis occurred concurrently during this research, the tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust emerged as a final outcome of the data analysis and a process of refinement in which the model was tested against the data of the present study. So, while the following examples from interviews are provided to illustrate the trust model, the data was generated before the identification of all the trust dynamics in the model. The strongest examples in relation to coverage of the four trust dynamics were selected from the data, so although these examples are grounded in the data, some interpretive assumptions have been made, drawing upon the trust literature. However, all such assumptions are made explicit in the explanation accompanying each example.

Additionally, where possible, more than one example has been provided for each combination of the four trust dynamics to illustrate different aspects of the model. Taken together, these examples support and demonstrate the operation of the trust model.

Importantly, while negative causes disconfirming the model were sought and resulted in refinement of the trust model, across each one of the 55 interviews conducted, there were no disconfirming data of the final Stability Contingent Model presented in this thesis. Having stated this, the trust model is presented as tentative, for although it is well grounded in this study's data, its generalisability over other contexts will need to be tested.

The three types of trust outcomes will be discussed in order of satisfied trust, alert trust and finally, stable lack of trust. This is because discussions of the latter two build upon notions explained in the discussion of satisfied trust.

5.2.3.1 Demonstration of satisfied trust: Examples A and B

In Examples A and B, as will be discussed in more detail after each extended quotation from the data, the trustors perceived the other party had stable benevolent intent to benefit the trustor, as informed by an attribution of internal factors, such as effort. Furthermore, the trustors believed the trustees to be competent (i.e. having the internal talent, skills, experience or knowledge) in the relevant task domain.

Example A:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The supervisor in Example A was considered to have benevolent intent based upon the comment '*he trusts us*', given that the trust literature and this study have identified benevolent intent as foundational to trust. The supervisor was considered by his subordinate to be competent, as he understood the mechanics of the task, as suggested

by the phrase *'He will look into it to make sure he understands it'* [the process in the particular circumstance]. Benevolent intent and competence were viewed as stable in this example as there was no mention during the interview of these aspects varying.

The data indicated that the subordinate had trust in the supervisor in relation to supporting the subordinate in the event of a complaint from a ratepayer. The data further suggested that this subordinate's trust in her supervisor was firm in extent and scope, and the subordinate was comfortable that this was a reliable situation and had no expectations that it may change: *'we can trust him to not back down to the ratepayer. We can trust him to put our case forward and hold firm'*.

Kahneman and Varey (1990) note that causal attributions are 'treated as objective facts about the world' (p. 1103). This adds weight to the newly minted concept of 'satisfied trust', in which the trustor has taken the trust dynamics (benevolent intent and competence) and causal dimensions of stability and internal locus of causality as 'fact', and has arrived at a place of trusting the other party and thus has ceased actively pursuing further-trust impacting information.

Example B:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The supervisor described in Example B was considered to have stable benevolent intent as suggested by the phrase *'he doesn't sort of fob me off sort of thing or anything, he'll listen to whatever you have to say'*. The supervisor was considered to have stable competence, as indicated by the statements *'[my supervisor] is good at what he does ... He's just professional as anything ... [and] understands people's situations, whether it's personal or work related'*.

Both Examples A and B suggested the trustors perceive the trustee had a stable, benevolent motivation to act in the trustor's best interests, and was competent. The data from both examples indicated the subordinate had satisfied trust in their supervisor, illustrated in Figure 5.7.

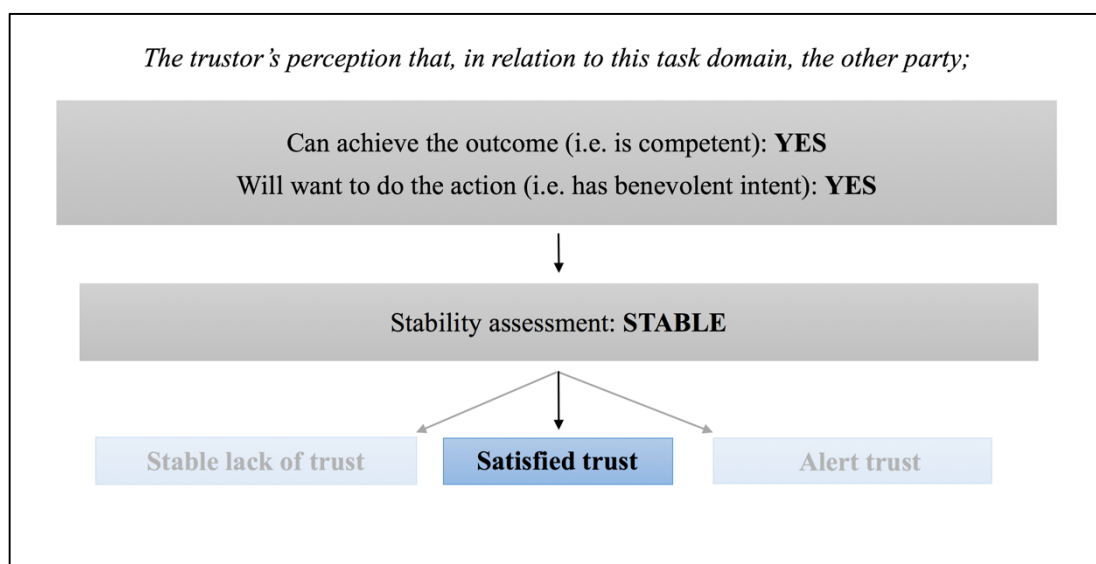


Figure 5.7 Illustrating Examples A and B data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

This notion of 'satisfied trust' which has emerged from the data, bridges the gap between Mayer et al.'s (1995) ABI trust model – wherein a feedback loop indicates a trustor continually reassesses trust following outcomes – and other trust literature that proposes that trust can be routine, 'without questioning its underlying assumptions' (Möllering, 2006, p. 52). Prior to the present study, why trust became 'routine' (stable) was not understood (Möllering, 2006) other than 'we may trust someone simply because our relation has worked out satisfactorily in the past' (Nooteboom, 2002, p. 43). This research has thus identified that when a trustor believes that a trustee has benevolent intent towards the trustor, competence in the task domain, and these factors are perceived as stable, the trust has reached a stable state and the trustor ceases to actively seek information to confirm or disprove these trust perceptions. However, as will be discussed later in Example J, information passively received may activate a re-assessment by the trustor where it conflicts with her current perceptions.

5.2.3.2 Demonstration of alert trust: Examples C and D

In Examples C and D, the trustors perceived the other party had benevolent intent toward the trustor, and was competent in the relevant domain. However, each example illustrates a different type of instability. In Example C, the trustor perceived the trustee had an unstable benevolent intent. In Example D, the trustor suspected the trustee may not have been competent despite an implied claim by the trustee of competence.

Example C:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

In Example C, the subordinate indicated a desire to deepen the existing relationship and strengthen the benevolent intent: *'[my supervisor] could focus a bit more on his communication and developing a relationship'*. The phrase *'a bit more'* implies a current relationship, although *'more'* was desired. However, the subordinate believed the supervisor's intent towards her was unstable: *'I don't feel that trust [by my supervisor] is consistent'*.

The subordinate considered the supervisor as competent in relation to *'people management'*. Although this was qualified by a statement of *'most of the time'*, people management is challenging to get 'right' each and every time, and research indicates that a few poor results does not necessarily result in a belief of incompetence due to a recognition that there may be external factors outside one's control (Fiske et al., 2007; Reeder & Fulks, 1980).

In addition, the subordinate contrasts the supervisor's competence in people management to his lack of knowledge in the subordinate's functional area. The subordinate trusted the supervisor on the former subject, but not on the latter.

The overall trust outcome was that the subordinate trusted her supervisor in relation in the context of people management issues, however she held suspicion regarding what her supervisor may do in the future; *‘I’m just thinking, “Okay, that’s great, I’m glad you trust me that much”, but then on other occasions I don’t feel that trust is consistent’*.

The trust outcome in this example is ‘alert trust’. This is discussed in more detail in conjunction with the trust outcome in Example D.

Example D:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

Benevolent intent was suggested by the supervisor’s trust and statements regarding the subordinates’ willingness, and prompt attention, to her requests; *‘whenever I ask them to do something, they do it and they’ll ring me back and tell me it’s done’*. Benevolent intent was also suggested by the participant’s trust in her subordinates: *‘I trust them fully’*. This conclusion is based on the premise that freedom of behaviour exists for the supervisor and subordinates, which means trust is rarely one-sided in interdependent relationships over the long term (Chang et al., 2016).

The subordinates in Example D were perceived by the supervisor to be competent in general: *‘They’re doing a good job’*. However, the supervisor’s uncertainty about whether one subordinate was as competent across all aspects of the work indicated the supervisor questioned the stability of this subordinate’s competence. The supervisor was not sure, despite the subordinate’s verbal assurance, that the subordinate was willing to admit when he did not know something. *‘The only thing I’m a little bit suss [suspicious] with [my subordinate] is he seems to say yes about everything instead of saying, “Well, no, I don’t understand that.”’*

This example is interesting in that the supervisor is aware that the subordinate’s competence and her perception of the subordinate’s competence may not align. The supervisor perceived her current understanding of her subordinate’s competence

would likely alter given further experience and observation of the subordinate's work. Therefore, the supervisor's perception was that her current understanding of her subordinate's competence was unstable. Although the supervisor was willing to trust the subordinate, the supervisor was also alert to signs of competence or lack of competence.

Thus, the data from Examples C and D generated the novel concept of 'alert trust', in which although there is trust (willing vulnerability), an inkling of suspicion exists. The trustor is alert for signals to reassure or confirm her suspicion for the continuation, or decline, of trust, as illustrated in Figures 5.8 and 5.9.

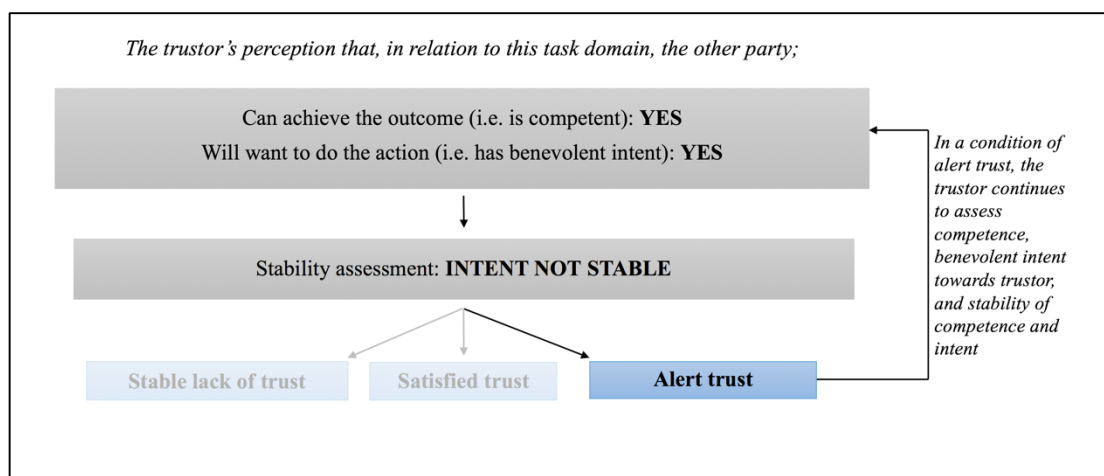


Figure 5.8 Illustrating Example C data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

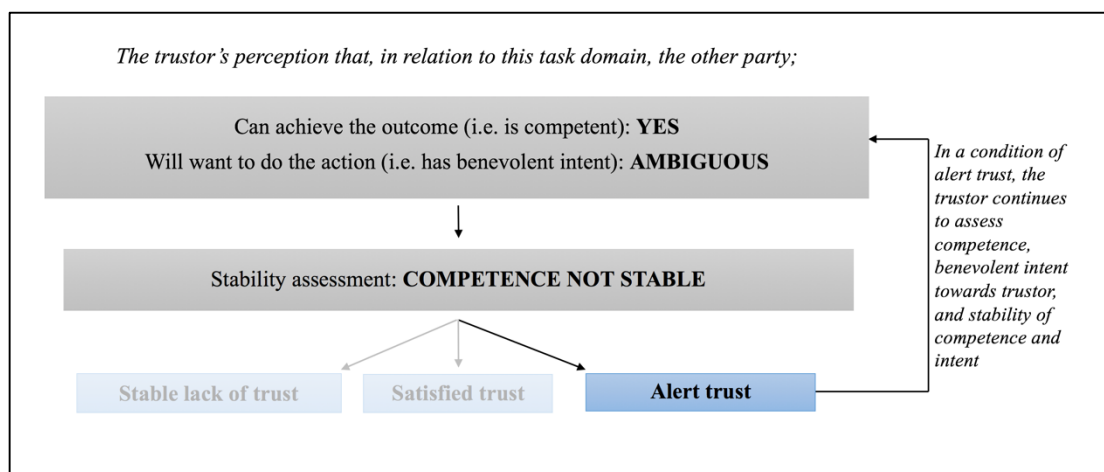


Figure 5.9 Illustrating Example D data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

Alert trust aligns with Weick's (2001) assertion that in situations of ambiguity, people pay closer attention to acts of choice and irrevocability. Wilson and Patent's (2011) research on trust within a mentoring relationship found that the uncertain party

extended information gathering from direct experience of the individual to seeking information from third parties. Note that being alert, or concerned, does not necessarily lower trust; a marketing study of trust found that while concern and trust were interwoven, they were different constructs with different dynamics (Milne & Boza, 1999).

Thus, the novel concept of ‘alert trust’ is supported by the data of this study and the literature.

5.2.3.3 Demonstration of alert trust: Examples E and F

In Examples E and F, the trustor perceived the other party had a stable benevolent intent towards the trustor. However, in both examples, the trustor perceived the trustee was *not* competent in the relevant domain, which according to the extant trust literature, would result in lack of trust. Yet as shown in the following quotations, the data indicated that the research participants trusted the other party, understanding that their competence was unstable, and would improve over time.

Example E:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

In this example, the trustor’s belief that the subordinate had stable, benevolent intent was inferred from the supervisor’s trust; *‘I trust [my subordinate] to work to the best of her ability’*. An attribution of unstable ability was indicated by the data in which the supervisor acknowledged the subordinate would improve her competence through experience and training. The supervisor had trust in the subordinate; however, she was being observant to update her understanding of the subordinate’s technical expertise as it evolved or remained stable. Thus, the supervisor has alert trust in the subordinate.

Example F:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The subordinate in Example F illustrated her belief that her supervisor had benevolent intent towards her subordinates in the incident wherein the supervisor refuted an accusation from the individual in higher management, which was levelled at the subordinates. However, the subordinate was aware her trust in the supervisor had boundaries, which aligned with the supervisor's areas of perceived competence. Although, rather than 'blaming' the supervisor for a lack of competence, the subordinate recognised it was not a fault internal to the supervisor, and had externalised this as the fault of the person '*one step above*' who hired the supervisor despite the lack of competence.

The subordinate implied her supervisor was growing in competence as she expressed that '*he does try*' without a qualifier which would indicate the effort had no benefit. Thus, the participant considered her supervisor currently lacked sufficient competence to benefit the subordinate with advice and guidance; however, the lack of competence was considered temporary.

To summarise Examples E and F, these research participants had trust in the subordinate and supervisor respectively; however, this trust was limited by the bounds of the trustee's competence. However, the subordinate was watchful for signs of growing competence in the tasks in which there was a current lack of competence. Thus, as shown in Figure 5.10, the trustors had alert trust in the trustees, which may result in increased stability of trust in the supervisor following perceived growth in competence.

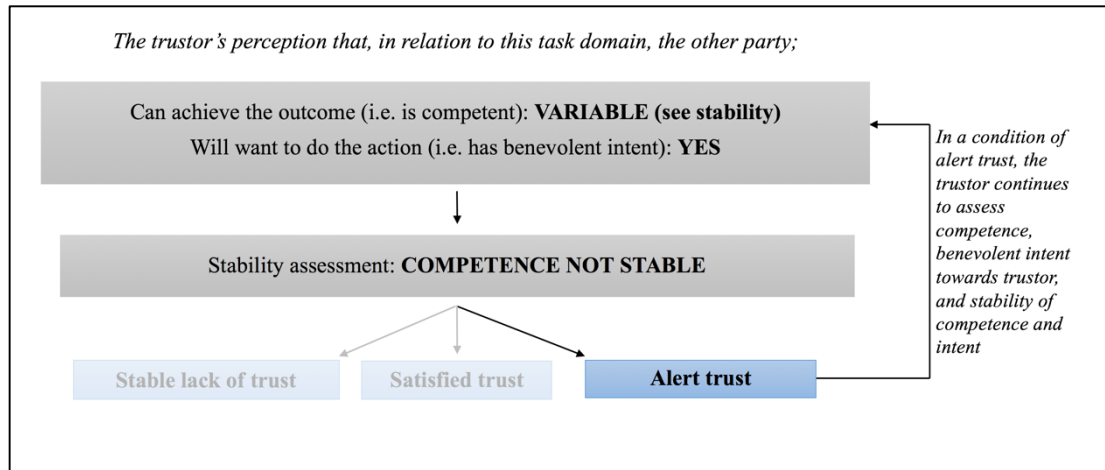


Figure 5.10 Illustrating Examples E and F data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

5.2.3.4 Demonstration of stable lack of trust: Example G

In Example G, the trustor perceived that the other party had benevolent intent towards the trustor. However, the trustor believed the other party exhibited variable competence (unstable competence). Further, the lack of stability was attributed to causes internal to the other party (i.e. an internal locus of causality).

Example G:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The supervisor described in Example G was considered to have stable benevolent intent from the sentence *'he's very collaborative so he will consult with the people who*

are directly involved in whatever work he's working on to make sure that he's got their input'. This was directly attributed to the supervisor (i.e. an internal locus of causality), as indicated by the rejoinder to that sentence of: 'that's not always the case', which indicated such collaboration was not a formal rule or informal norm of the organisation.

There was no indication across this the interview that this participant perceived her supervisor lacked competence in the mechanics of the tasks, but rather in maintaining a firm position. As indicated by the quotation, the participant believed the supervisor's competence to achieve a goal was not stable as external pressures from herself and her supervisor's boss resulted in a change from the supervisor's initial position: *'I don't trust that he's been able to make a good case ... I'm hard to say no to and I know that [my supervisor] isn't because I've said no to him on numerous occasions ... [I am] not trusting him because I don't think he's got the confidence or sometimes the debating ability to push it ... the perception that maybe he didn't fight hard enough'.*

In some instances, an external cause (pressure from the supervisor's boss) could be perceived as an external locus of causality for a supervisor conceding to another's point of view. However, the data from this participant suggested she attributed an internal locus of causality, given that she, with less formal power than her supervisor, was able to say *'no to him on numerous occasions'*. Also supporting the conclusion that the participant attributed reasons internal to the supervisor for the lack of stability was her reference to his lack of ability or confidence: *'I don't think he's got the confidence or sometimes the debating ability to push it [his point of view]'*.

This example of stable lack of trust is illustrated in Figure 5.11.

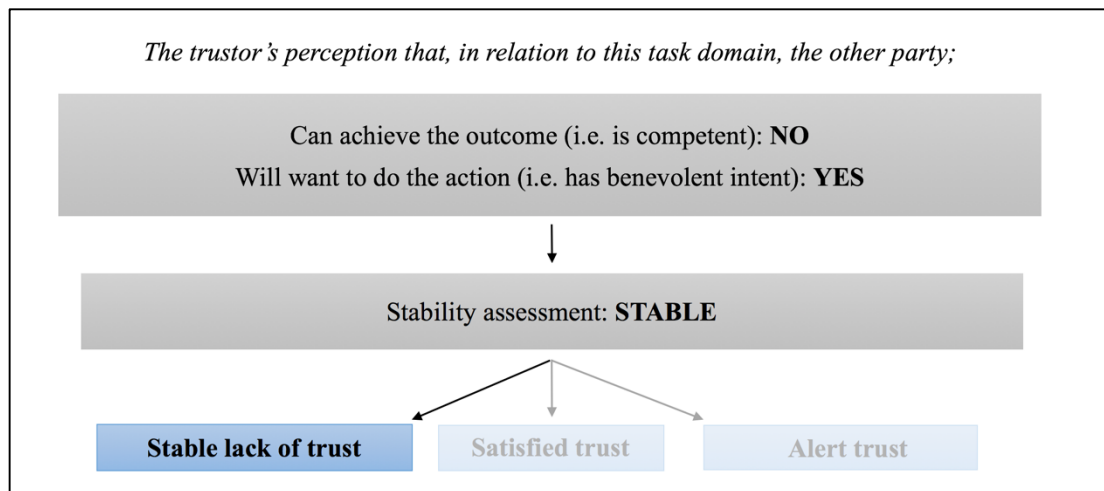


Figure 5.11 Illustrating Example G data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

5.2.3.5 Demonstration of stable lack of trust: Example H

Although in the below example from the data, it is unclear whether the research participant perceived the other party had a benevolent intent or lack of benevolent intent, what is clear is that the participant believed the other party had a stable lack of competence, and that the participant lacked trust in the other party. This aligns with the extant trust literature which indicates that the outcome of a lack of competence is a lack of trust.

Example H:

The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

In Example H, the subordinate was perceived by her supervisor as not being competent in the domain of the ‘new things’, and not expected to gain competence, i.e. the lack of competence was stable. The outcome was no trust in the domain of these tasks. There is also strong consensus in the literature that lack of competence in a domain does not support trust (e.g. Butler, 1991; Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995; Six, 2005).

So, although the data from this participant were indeterminate in relation to perceived intent towards the supervisor, the stable lack of competence was sufficient to result in a stable lack of trust in the domain of these ‘new tasks’. Example H is illustrated using the Stable Contingent Model of Trust in Figure 5.12.

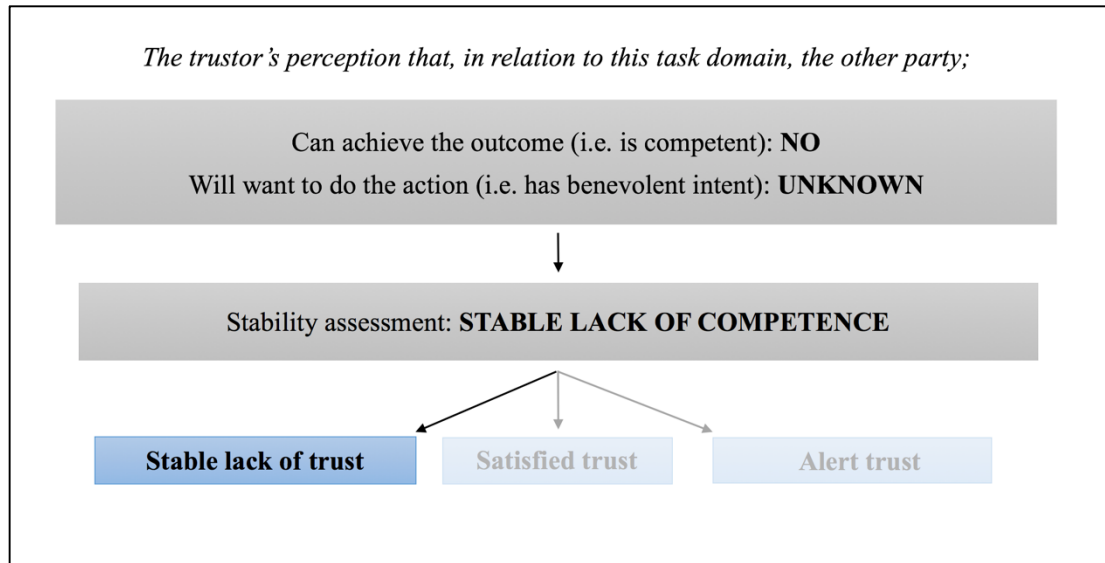


Figure 5.12 Illustrating Example H data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

5.2.3.6 Demonstration of stable lack of trust: Example I

As discussed in more detail following the extended quotation, the supervisor in Example I perceived the other party to be self-oriented, rather than other-oriented, and so lacked benevolent intent towards the trustor. Furthermore, the trustor believed this lack of benevolence was stable. Evidence from the data was insufficient to understand whether the supervisor believed her subordinate was competent or not; however, it is very clear that the supervisor did not trust the subordinate. A lack of trust resulting from a perceived lack of benevolence aligns with the trust literature.

Example I:

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The full quotation is unable to be reproduced here due to confidentiality reasons.

The data in Example I indicated that the supervisor believed the subordinate deliberately engaged in acts (changing the data on the purchase order and thus lying) that benefitted the subordinate while compromising the supervisor's reputation. The supervisor perceived there was lack of benevolent intent, as the subordinate privileged her own interests.

The result was a stable lack of trust in the subordinate, as illustrated in Figure 5.13. This lack of trust did not appear to be limited to a task domain, but was a broad lack of trust: *'I'm not going to trust anything [from you]'*.

The interpersonal trust literature is consistent in identifying benevolent intent towards the trustor as a trust dynamic (e.g. Barber, 1983; Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995; Nooteboom, 2002; Six, 2003; Wasti et al., 2011). The data of this study support this. As illustrated in this example, a lack of benevolent intent corresponds with lack of trust. This trust outcome appeared to pivot on the lack of benevolence, and thus the other causal dimensions in the trust model were irrelevant.

The result, in the participant's words, was *'... from now on, that's it, I'm not going to trust anything [from the subordinate]'*.

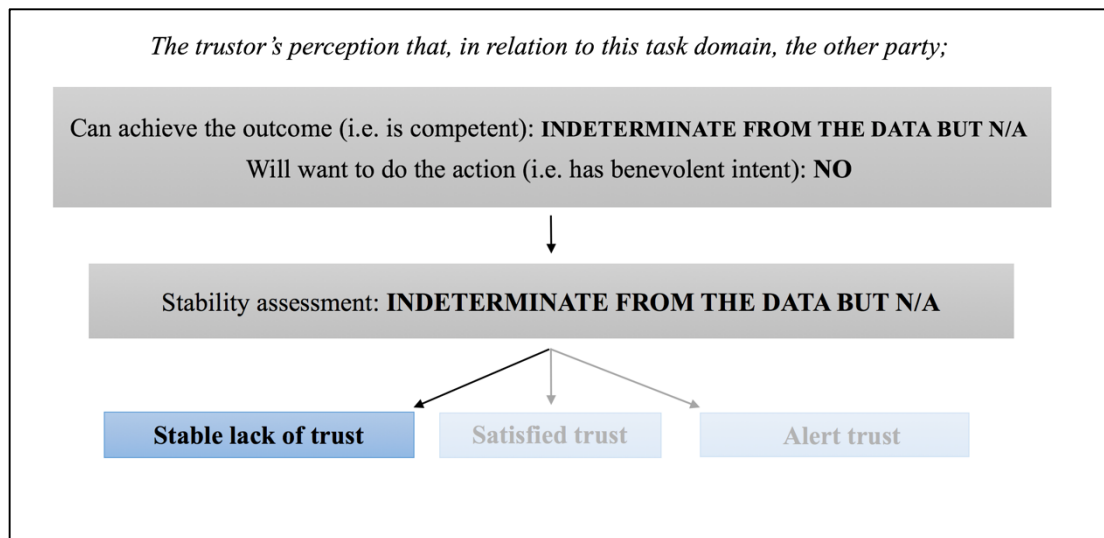


Figure 5.13 Illustrating Example I data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

5.2.3.7 Demonstration of satisfied trust changing to stable lack of trust: Example J

Example J is of particular interest as the participant clearly reveals very different trust assessments of the same individual at different points in time. These have been labelled ‘time 1’ and ‘time 2’ for ease of reference.

At time 1, the trustor perceived that the other party had a stable benevolent intent towards the trustor and was competent in the relevant domain. However, at time 2, the trustor revised her intent assessment and perceived that the other party lacked benevolent intent towards herself.

This example illustrates that although the trust may reach a point where the trustor ceases to proactively seek information to inform her trust (i.e. the trustor has stable trust in the other party), information received on a reactive basis may instigate a reassessment of trust.

Example J.:

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The participant's use of the phrases '*the correct way*' and '*the correct wording*' supports the view that the participant perceived her supervisor as competent. The participant also perceived her supervisor had benevolent intent towards her and would mentor and guide her: '*I know if I [did] something wrong [my supervisor was] going to explain ... [then] show me how to do it the correct way*'.

The data in Example J indicates that at the beginning of the subordinate's relationship with her supervisor there was a mutual level of trust: '*we had a good trust*'. The stability of this trust was further suggested by the subordinate's willing reliance upon her supervisor '*instead of trying to solve the problem myself, I will say to [my subordinates] that, "I'll discuss with [my supervisor]"*' ... *So, I get the correct wording and the correct way of saying whatever the answer to what the question is*'.

However, once the participant perceived she was repeatedly overlooked for projects or programs which were relevant to her role, it provoked the subordinate to re-evaluate her trust in her supervisor. '*I think [overlooking me for the project/program was the] start of it*'. The subordinate's perception at time 2 was that her supervisor no longer

had benevolent intent. The subordinate's assessment at the beginning of the relationship was that *'she had my back completely, 100%'*; however, she later believed that: *'she hasn't got my back'*.

The re-evaluated level of trust was that the stable trust had deteriorated to a lack of trust: *'then I didn't trust [my supervisor]'*. The firmness and stability of this lack of trust is suggested by the firmness of the subordinate's new position; *'step back, don't say anything. That's my new motto'*.

Figure 5.14 illustrates the participant's change from satisfied trust to stable lack of trust.

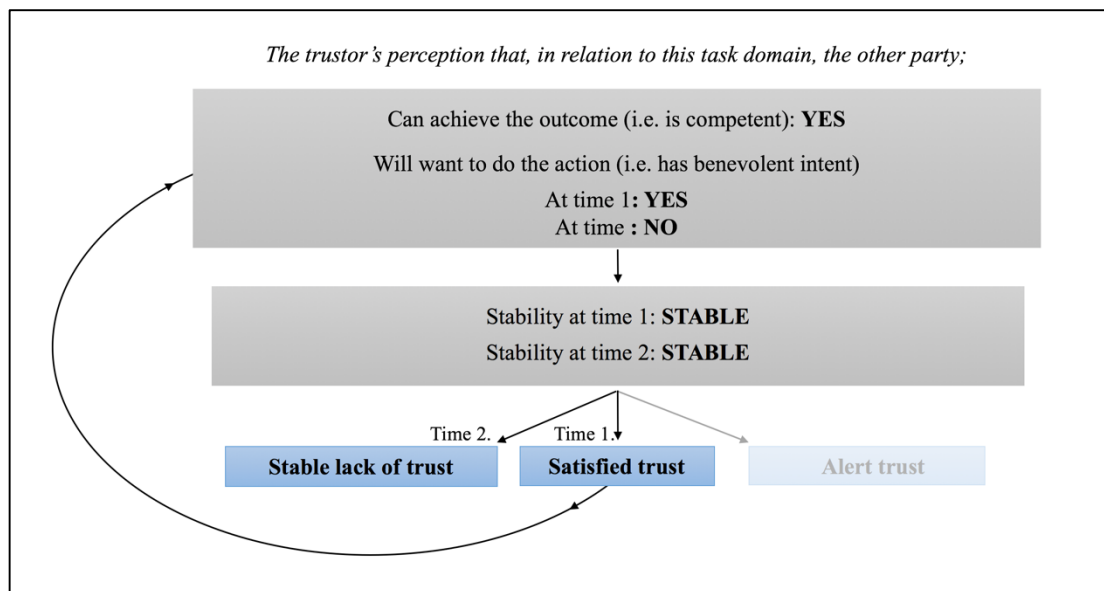


Figure 5.14 Illustrating Example J data using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust

The summary of all 10 examples has all been collated into Table 5.4. This provides a holistic view of the operation of the tentative Stability Contingent Model of Trust and supports the three broad outcomes of trust (stable lack of trust, satisfied trust and alert trust).

Table 5.4 Summary of examples illustrating the tentative trust model

Examples	Trustor's perception of the other party in the relevant task domain		Trust Outcome
	Benevolent intent towards trustor	Competence	
A, B & J, at time 1	Benevolent intent: yes Stability: stable	Competent: yes Stability: stable	Satisfied trust
C & D	Benevolent intent: yes Stability: unknown	Competent: ambiguous (see stability) Stability: not stable Locus of causality: unknown	Alert trust
E & F	Benevolent intent: yes Stability: stable	Competent: no Stability: not stable Locus of causality: external	Alert trust
G	Benevolent intent: yes Stability: stable	Competent: varied (see stability) Stability: not stable Locus of causality: internal	Stable lack of trust
H	Unknown, but not relevant as <i>stable lack of competence</i> determined the trust outcome	Competent: no Stability: stable	Stable lack of trust
J, at time 2b	Benevolent intent: no Stability: stable	Competent: yes Stability: stable	Stable lack of trust
I	Benevolent intent: no Stability: stable	Unknown, but not relevant as <i>stable lack of benevolence</i> determined the trust outcome	Stable lack of trust

5.3 Additional Insights

Following are three insights which emerged from the data in addition to the findings related to the Stability Contingent Model of Trust.

5.3.1 Nested benevolence

An advantage of grounded research is that while the researcher is informed by the literature, the data drive the analysis and so the subsequent results are not ‘theoretically pre-formed’ (Charmaz, 2007, p. 80), thus potentially revealing new insights that advance the field. This study’s analysis of the trust dynamics that relate to ‘benevolent intent’ suggested the trustor ascertained intent towards herself from multiple perspectives, providing more nuance to intent trust assessments than is currently indicated in the trust literature. In other words, in perceiving intent, the trustor appeared to be concerned with how the potential trustee treated:

- all people;
- people within the group/s of which the trustor was a member; and
- the trustor, as in individual.

This researcher has termed this ‘nested benevolence’, as illustrated in Figure 5.15.

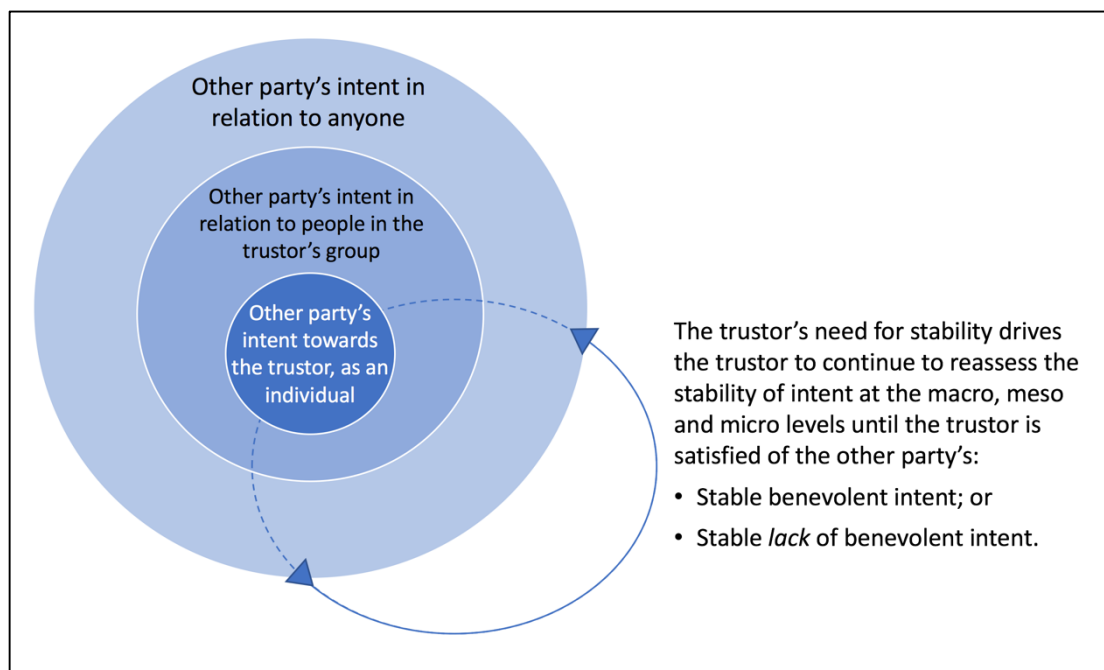


Figure 5.15 Nested benevolence

Dietz (2011, p. 216) argues that people use ‘multiple sources of evidence’ in making trustworthiness judgements, including reputation (third-party trust) and role assumptions. This supports the analysis of this study, which suggests individuals observe and integrate a confluence of behaviours for intent, being: (1) ‘generalised

intent' (intent in relation to anyone); (2) the intent shown towards different groups of which the individual is a member; and (3) benevolence directed specifically to the individual. These multiple sources of information increase a trustor's confidence in the other's intent towards herself, which translates to a more certain prediction of how the trustor will act in the future.

Intuitively, it is profitable for an individual to utilise various levels of intent (macro, meso and micro), as a triangulation of sources to increase the accuracy of perceived benevolent intent. Taking this perspective also widens the focus from '*what*' a trustor is looking for (particular traits of the trustee), to emphasising '*how*' and '*why*' the trustor is alert to particular trustee behaviours (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 'What, how and why' of trustworthiness assessments

What, how and why questions	Detail
What the trustor is looking for when making a trust assessment	Trustworthiness traits in the potential trustee
How the trustor is looking for this information	By triangulating different sources of information of the other party's intent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In relation to anyone ▪ In relation to people in the trustor's group ▪ In relation to the trustor, as an individual
Why the trustor does this	Optimal accuracy of the trust assessment

The perceptual shift suggested by this study echoes the shift of focus in the psychology field from the content of goals (*what* an individual is trying to achieve) to the process of goal selection and pursuit (*how* is the individual trying to achieve her goal) (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Scholars in this field contend that social cognition research transitioned through a period of attempting to apprehend the subject to a redundant level of detail, to the detriment of a focus upon social behaviour. 'Most writers were so intrigued by the rich potential yield from a purely cognitive analysis that they seemed to have temporarily forgotten what it served, namely, people interacting with other people' (Fiske, 1992, p. 878).

5.3.2 Finding that ‘support of a subordinate’s career development’ as a trust dynamic is limited to the white-collar context

Trust is context dependent (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Pirson & Malhotra, 2011; Rousseau et al., 1998). Accordingly, the literature recommends researching trust over different contexts (cf. Li, 2012). Currently though, there is scant research on trust dynamics for blue-collar workers. Despite a comprehensive search, the only research directed towards trust dynamics with blue-collar workers appears to have been that by Clark (1993). The search was conducted with the following journal databases: Business Source Complete, Emerald, Google Scholar, Informit, JSTOR, Ovid, Oxford Index, ProQuest, Scopus, Springer Link, Sage Journals, Taylor & Francis and Wiley. The search was undertaken with the following parameters: (i) combined search terms ‘blue’ and ‘trust’, (ii) articles written in English, and (iii) no date restrictions.

Tangentially, but not directly applicable, was Cook and Wall’s (1980) research with blue-collar workers to develop a measure for quality of working life, that found interpersonal trust to be a factor. The scarcity of blue-collar trust literature aligns with Cowan and Bochantin’s (2011, p. 20) observation that ‘[r]esearch investigating blue-collar work and life issues has been sparse’.

This scarcity of trust research in the blue-collar context appears incongruous given the number of blue-collar workers. For example, in the local governments of Australia and Britain, which as Commonwealth countries, exhibit strong similarities, there is a combined total of approximately 2.16 million blue-collar workers. (Section 2.3.3 discusses this figure in more detail.) The participants of the present study included local government blue-collar workers, such as those who maintain parks, footpaths, roads, streetscapes, plant operators, mechanics and those involved in waste disposal for the municipality (Hastings et al., 2015).

The human resources literature indicates several generalised differences between blue- and white-collar workers. Important to this study are the differences in motivating work characteristics (Huang, 2011) as well as the different dimensions and relative importance of facets of career success (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1996). The human resources literature asserts that as a result of structural factors, blue-collar workers have less opportunity for workplace development (Huang,

2011; Thomas, 1996) and ascending the organisational hierarchy (Hennequin, 2007; Lucas & Buzzanell, 2004; Thomas, 1996).

The trust literature asserts that support of a subordinate's career development builds the trust a subordinate has in her supervisor (Kramer, 1996; Six, 2005). However, as discussed earlier, the trust literature has almost exclusively focused on white-collar subordinates.

This study's data supported the trust literature's assertion that a direct supervisor's or individual in a management role's assistance in a subordinate's career development, was likely to be received as 'felt trust' by the subordinate. The subordinate then reciprocated this trust.

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However, data in relation to building a subordinate's trust in her supervisor through the supervisor's support for the subordinate's career (via promotions, training and opportunities to act in higher roles) emerged only from white-collar subordinates, with nil data from blue-collar subordinates. Therefore, while the data supported the extant trust literature in relation to white-collar subordinates, a new limitation was identified – the circumstances in which it is not applicable, namely the blue-collar work context.

5.3.3 Impact of organisational structure upon interpersonal trust within an organisation

The data of this study supported Shapiro's (1987) assertion that for institutional structures to support trust, the actors within the institution must also trust the organisation, as constituted by its structures. The data therefore suggest that to study the impact of organisational structures upon trust, one must also study the trust in the structures. Unfortunately, given the already wide scope, the present study was targeted

to the impact of organisational structures upon trust and did not delve deeply into participants trust in the structures.

However, two key findings did emerge from the data on organisational structures. One of the most salient issues from data of this study was in support of Giddens' (1992) argument that organisational structures are dependent upon individuals to not only develop such structures, but to have effect are also dependent upon individuals to enact the structures to have effect and thus it is the *intersection of structure and individual representing the organisation* that impacts interpersonal trust.

This is illustrated in the following quotations wherein individuals with responsibility to enact organisational structure were perceived to have failed to carry out organisational rules. A key difference appeared to be whether the outcome was perceived to *benefit* or alternatively, *fail to help, or harm* the trustor, which relates back to the definition of trust as based on an 'expectation that the other will perform a particular action that is important [to the trustor]' (Six, 2007, p. 290).

In the first example, a failure to enforce rules led to *increased trust in the individual* not enforcing the organisational rules. The supervisor prioritised compassion over rule enforcement, demonstrating benevolence and thereby supporting interpersonal trust.

Example illustrating where lack of enforcement of rules *supported* trust:

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However, as illustrated in the following examples, failure to enforce rules may also lead to *lower trust* in the individual *and* the structure.

Examples illustrating where lack of enforcement of rules *decreased* trust:

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Giddens notes that the connections between the trustor and the representative of the organisation ‘are places of vulnerability for abstract systems, but also junctions at which trust [in a person and trust in a system] can be *maintained* or *built up*’ (Giddens, 1992, p. 88; emphasis added). The data of this study indicates that at these points, trust can also be *diminished*.

The second key finding is that the organisational structures that the participants of this study identified as impacting trust related very heavily to human resources practices. Primarily, this was in relation to a perceived lack of consistency, but there was also some data relating to perceived breaches in trust following a lack of consideration and care towards an employee, which equates to the benevolence trust dynamic.

Example of lack of consistency in human resources (HR) practices:

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Examples of lack of benevolence in human resources (HR) practices:

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A smaller consideration in terms of groundedness (i.e. the number of quotations/codes generated) was the lack of effective organisational structures for reportable accountabilities and subsequent oversight by a higher level in the organisation (e.g. executive management, audit committee or elected members), which it can be argued, equates to a competence assessment in interpersonal trust.

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To summarise the impact of organisational structure upon interpersonal trust within the organisation, the findings of this exploratory study indicated that to understand the impact of organisational structures upon interpersonal trust, the research needs to jointly study: (1) the interaction between the organisational structures and those enacting the structures; and (2) the trust individuals have in the structures. Thus, the present study suggests a targeted approach for future research aiming to study the impact of institutional structures upon interpersonal trust.

This study also found that, at a high level, the trust dynamics for organisational structures exhibit similarity to the trust dynamics which emerged from this study in relation to interpersonal trust, namely stability (consistency), benevolence and competence. However, given this study's findings of the four elements of

interpersonal trust dynamics (benevolence, competence, stability and locus of causality) it may be that locus of causality is also a trust dynamic for organisational structures, with the external environment (legislation, suppliers, competitors, customers and the community) exerting external influence upon an organisation's ability to achieve an outcome (i.e. the organisation's 'competence').

Finally, the data in relation to organisational structures suggest that future research into the impact of organisational structures upon interpersonal trust within an organisation consider that human resources practices are likely to inform the organisation about its 'organisational trust competence'. In comparison, reward and recognition structures were largely irrelevant to trust in a local government context.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

As a qualitative study utilising a grounded research method, the findings of this study are firmly based in the data and have emerged through a rigorous process of analysis. Thus, the results are dependable and credible. The grounded research process has facilitated identification of higher concepts from this study's findings, and thus the Stability Contingent Model of Trust has emerged from this study's data and analysis.

However, this research was a small, exploratory study. Therefore, it is recommended that these findings be explored within other industries to assess the generalisability of these findings and refine the tentative stability contingent trust model over different contexts if required, particularly the novel aspects to the trust literature of stability and locus of causality.

In addition to ascertaining the applicability of locus of causality and stability, it is recommended for further research to be undertaken in contexts of artistic endeavor. This is because Weiner's attribution theory encompasses three causal attributions: locus of causality, controllability and stability. However, as explained earlier in this thesis, the data of this study only invoked two causal attributions (locus of causality and stability). This may have occurred as the present research is a small study, and/or because the tasks encompassed within a local government context do not lend themselves to activities that may be considered to require natural talent or aptitude, such as artistic activities. An area recommended for future study is to research trust in

a context where an individual's talent is considered relevant to the achievement of a task to ascertain whether controllability also impacts upon trust assessments.

One area recommended for future research is ascertaining the generalisability of the newly identified trust dynamic wherein a lack of competence does not lower trust, as underpinned by attribution theory concepts of lack of stability and external locus of causality. A different context in which it is conjectured that this novel trust dynamic may be found is a workplace introducing new technology, as this may also induce an external and temporary attribution for a lack of competency.

5.5 Conclusion

Multi-dimensional studies into trust are sparse (Costa et al., 2017; Six & Verhoest, 2017). This study has been multi-dimensional on two fronts. It has examined trust (1) at the micro (trust between individuals) as embedded in the meso (organisational structural context) level, and (2) explored and compared perceived and actual trust dynamics. The context was also novel for trust research pertaining to two aspects; data were generated within an Australian local government context, and blue-collar workers were included as research participants.

The data of the present research have revealed several novel trust concepts. Shaking an almost universal notion that competence in the task is required for trust, the data exposed a context where this did not hold. When the trustor held a dual belief that the lack of competence was a temporary situation *and* the situation for not-yet-being competent was not the 'fault' of the trustee but, rather, caused by external factors, the lack of competence did not affect trust. Attribution theory, which explains how individuals ascribe reasons for success or failure (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1986) was profitably applied to explain this situation by utilising two key concepts attribution theory; locus of causality (the internal/external continuum) and the temporal dimension of stability (stable/temporary continuum).

Attribution theory was also useful in explaining the other novel finding that the impact of a supervisor failing to follow through on an action requested by the subordinate was attenuated in particular circumstances. When a subordinate perceived that an external cause, such as heavy workload, prevented a supervisor from actioning the request, the

decrease in a subordinate's trust in the supervisor was ameliorated to the extent that external factors were perceived to account for the failure.

The present study also revealed a hitherto unrevealed nuance within the trust literature in relation to a purported mechanism for supervisors to signal their trust in the subordinate. Such signalling is important as the subordinate is likely to perceive this as felt trust or benevolence, and thus career development support encourages reciprocated trust from the subordinate (Kramer, 1996; Six, 2005). Examples of career development assistance are a supervisor's support for workplace development and training, promotional opportunities, high profile work assignments and opportunities to act in higher roles. However, data in relation to career development support arose only from white-collar subordinates, with nil data from blue-collar subordinates. This is in alignment with human resources literature which explains that career development is typically not pertinent to blue-collar work roles. Thus, this study supports the trust literature that a supervisor supporting a subordinate's career development can increase subordinate trust in the supervisor. However, the data reveal the limitations of this supervisor action as pertaining only to white-collar, but not blue-collar, contexts.

In addition, this study bridges the gap between Mayer et al.'s (1995) ABI trust model wherein a feedback loop indicates a trustor continually reassesses trust following outcomes and other trust literature which proposes that trust can be routine, 'without questioning its underlying assumptions' (Möllering, 2006, p. 52). Prior to the present study, why trust may become 'routine' (stable) was not understood (Möllering, 2006) other than that 'we may trust someone simply because our relation has worked out satisfactorily in the past' (Nooteboom, 2002, p. 43). This research has identified that when a trustor believes that a trustee has benevolent intent towards the trustor, competence in the task domain, and these factors are perceived as stable, the trust has reached a stable state, which this thesis has named as 'satisfied trust'. In this state, the trustor ceases to actively seek information to confirm or disprove her trust perceptions.

Other contributions of this research to the trust literature are the following novel concepts/terms.

- Generalised benevolence: intent towards anyone, mirroring the established trust concept of generalised trust.

- Nested benevolence: a descriptor for assessing another party's intent, triangulating the intent information from intent towards oneself: (1) as an individual, (2) as a member of a group, and (3) generalised benevolence.
- The twin concepts of 'satisfied trust' and 'alert trust'. These differentiate between expected permanence of trust (from the trustor's perspective).

'Satisfied trust' exists where a trustor is comfortable that the current assessment of trust dynamics is stable and durable. In contrast, 'alert trust' exists where trust (willing vulnerability) co-exists with a belief that the perceived trust dynamics may change, and thus the trustor is alert for signals that may alter future levels of trust depending upon whether trust is reassured or alternatively, suspicions confirmed and trust declines.

It is concluded that while there is a rich and comprehensive literature on interpersonal trust, bounded studies such as this one can both illuminate existing theories and present new insights for further study. In this study, especially in the local government context, there are immediate practical applications in the workplace for organisations, supervisors and subordinates seeking to engender and retain trust relationships. For example, using the Stability Contingent Model of Trust, organisational actors can incorporate signals of benevolent intent, competence and stability into their trust-related practices. Organisations can design human resource practices, particularly those that structure interactions between staff across departmental boundaries, as supporting positive perceptions by supervisors and subordinates of stable and positive competence and intent, including a perception of shared goals rather than competitive goals. Finally, the nested benevolence idea – that is, that trustors triangulate across contexts – suggests that attention needs to be paid to the trust at the three levels of micro (individual), meso (team) and macro organisational activities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Letter to participating organisation

[Name of CEO]
[Name of Local Government organisation]
[Address]

6th June 2014

Dear [name of CEO],

I am currently undertaking a doctorate of philosophy at Curtin University, conducting research into how trust is built, and retained or lost.

I am following up on a conversation we had at the LGMA Aspiring Leaders Forum on 28/11/2013. At the time, you indicated that the [name of organisation] would be interested in participating in research to gain further understanding about how trust operates and can be further supported in your organisation. This is particularly relevant given that one of the [name of organisation]'s organisational values is trust.

As I have now received Ethics approval from the Curtin University Graduate School of Business, I am now in a position to be more specific regarding the research; the benefits and commitment from the [name of organisation].

I offer to undertake a research study with the [name of organisation]'s employees to report on the current state, enablers and challenges to trust formation and retention between employees and their supervisors. Particular attention will be given to field staff, however the research will be conducted over all Directorates.

Benefits offered to the [name of organisation]

A written report and presentation to management including;

- The current state, enablers and challenges to trust in the [name of organisation]
- Where relevant, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement
- A summary of the academic literature on trust within organisations.
- A presentation to general staff on general findings

Note that the information will be general in nature; no staff member will be identifiable, and responses will be de-identified and merged with other responses.

Commitment from the [name of organisation]

- Approximately 10-15 minutes time at regular team meetings to explain and promote participating in the research
- Access to staff who volunteer to participate in the one hour interviews.
- A private room at the [name of organisation] in which to conduct interviews.
- Provision of a copy of the organisational chart with positions and employee names.

I am happy for interviews to be conducted at times convenient for the participant and the [name of organisation].

Please find attached a copy of the Informed Consent form that will be provided to staff for your information.

In this research, I am under guidance and direction from Curtin University, specifically my supervisor, Professor Alma Whiteley and the Curtin Ethics Committee. (Contact details are provided on the Informed Consent form.)

I look forward to an opportunity to discuss this proposal further.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracey Hirst', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tracey Hirst, B.Comm, MBL
m: 0403 040 092
e: tracey.hirst@postgrad.curtin.edu.au

Appendix B Informed Consent Form



Trust Structure and Context within Local Government
(*Curtin Uni. ethics approval number: GSB05-14*)

Part 1: Information sheet - Sharing information about the study with you

Introduction and Purpose

Hello, my name is Tracey Hirst and I am a Doctoral student at Curtin University conducting research into how is trust built, and retained or lost. I invite you to be part of this research to gain further understanding about trust.

Purpose of the research

The study is to explore and understand what affects trust between people in a work environment.

Your participation

You are being invited to take part in this research because your experience as employee, supervisor or leader can contribute to our understanding and knowledge about what affects trust levels in an organisation. This research will involve your participation in an individual interview of approximately one hour.

Voluntary Participation

You are under no obligation to take part in this research and may withdraw your consent at any time. There are no consequences for refusing or withdrawing.

My promises to you;

- You will not be personally identified
- Your responses will be de-identified and merged with other responses
- Your individual responses will not be shared with anyone (I will only be sharing the general findings)

With all that said, I'd really appreciate your support so please get involved.

Sharing the Results

The general findings will be available in my doctoral thesis and feedback in a general nature (common themes) will be available to the organisation.

Procedure

The procedure involves one hour of your time and will be conducted in a comfortable, secure place of your choosing. Everything you discuss with me is confidential. I will record the interview by note-taking and audio recording. The audio recording will be transcribed and amalgamated with other data so that no one's identity is known.

All information is absolutely confidential, and no one else except myself and my Curtin University supervisor (Professor Alma Whiteley) will have access to the audio recording or transcript. The audio recording will be kept under lock and key and destroyed after the research thesis has been accepted. I will be the only person who knows individual identities, as each participant will be given a number.

Benefits

The reward is your contribution to helping managers and leaders understand more about trust.

Confidentiality

I, and Professor Whiteley, will not share specific information gathered to anyone. The information that is collected from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will be anonymised. Only I will know the correlation to your name and your anonymised number, and this information will be secured under lock and key. It will not be shared with or given to anyone. You will not be identified in any of the reporting of the data.

Who to Contact

If you have any queries or concerns about any part of the research study, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my Curtin University supervisor, Professor Alma Whiteley. Thank you very much for your participation and interest in this study.

Tracey Hirst

tracey.hirst@postgrad.curtin.wa.edu.au, mobile: 0403 040 092

Professor Alma Whiteley Curtin Graduate Business School GPO Box U1987 Perth 6845 Ph: 9266 7714 Alma.Whiteley@gsb.curtin.edu.au	Secretary of Human Research Ethics Committee Curtin University of Technology GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845 Ph: 9266 2784 hrec@curtin.edu.au
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Part 2: Certificate of consent

I, the undersigned, voluntarily agree to take part in the study '*Trust Structure and Context within Local Government*'

- I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the researcher of the nature, purpose, location, and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result.
- I understand that all personal data relating to research participants is held and processed in the strictest confidence and that any information that might potentially identify me will not be used in any publication resulting from this study.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice.
- I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation.

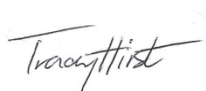
Name of participant (BLOCK CAPITALS):

Signed:

Date:


Contact details (phone and email)

Name of researcher: TRACEY HIRST

Signed: 


Date: 1 June 2014

Appendix C Poster to recruit participants



The [organisation] is participating in world breaking research on Trust

*What do you need before you trust someone?
What do you need to do before you are trusted?*



Hello, my name is Tracey Hirst and I am a Doctoral student at Curtin University conducting research into how trust is built, retained or lost.

I invite you to participate in a one hour individual and confidential discussion with me on your experiences of trust, and trusting.

I'm interested ... what does it involve?
Just one hour of your time, during work hours. This study is governed by ethics of Curtin University. Everything you discuss with me is absolutely confidential. This study is to find repeated themes.

What is the benefit?
One of the [organisation's] values is trust. Your executive are interested in improving trust, so this information has the potential to directly improve your workplace. This research will also increase understanding about trust for the academic community.

My promises to you;


- You will not be personally identified
- Your responses will be anonymous and merged with other responses

*With all that said, I'd really appreciate your support so please get involved.
Interviews are being conducted now.*

To book your interview or for further information, contact:

Tracey Hirst
mob: 0403 040 092
tracey.hirst@postgrad.curtin.edu.au

or [name of contact person at the organisation]



Appendix D Framework for the semi-structured interview questions

D.1 Interview questions for ‘subordinate’ role participants

Thank participant for coming, discuss informed consent and ask whether they have any questions.

- Re-iterate the section ‘My promises to you’ (on promotional poster)
- I will be asking about the ‘best’ and ‘worst’ case as these are easily recalled
- If questions don’t make sense, let me know and I will rephrase
- I am interested in your thoughts and experiences here at the [name of organisation] and please give examples where possible
- Show recorder off switch

Put on digital recorder – ask if they can turn off (not just put on silent) their mobile phone as it interferes with the recording.

Section 1: Warm up questions to ease participant into the interview.

1. Tell me a little about the area that you work in, what you do.
2. Roughly how many people are in your team?
3. Have you worked in this team for long?
4. As I will be referring to your supervisor in some questions, do you mind telling me the name of your supervisor?
5. Have you known [supervisor name] for long?

Section 2.

6. How would you describe trust in the work environment?

Check the answer with below definition and add bits the respondent did not say.

'[T]rust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another party, based upon the expectation that the other will perform a particular action that is important [to the trustor]'

These first questions are about your supervisor, [supervisor name]'s trust in you.
[Accompanied by downwards hand gesture, indicating direction of trust]

(Relates to research objective R02b – received trust)

7. What you think [supervisor name] sees in you (how you act for example, or the work you complete) that leads [supervisor name] to trust you?
8. How does [supervisor name] demonstrate that s/he trusts you?
9. Has there been an occasion when you have felt particularly trusted by [supervisor name], when [supervisor name] believed s/he relied on you – if so, can you tell me about this.
10. Trust tends to be specific, for example, I might trust someone to return a book, but not trust them to look after my kids. Are there any circumstances where you do *not* feel trusted by [supervisor name]?
11. How did s/he show that s/he did not trust you?
12. Has there been anything that you have done, or failed to do, that has lowered [supervisor name]'s level of trust in you?
 - Yes: please tell me about this
 - No: Okay, then, based on your knowledge of [supervisor name]; What would one of their team need to do, or fail to do, that would lower [supervisor name]'s trust in that staff member?

(Relates to research objective R01a)

The next questions are about you, trusting your supervisor, [supervisor name].
[Accompanied by upwards hand gesture, indicating direction of trust]

13. Tell me about a time when you have trusted [supervisor name], and why?
14. Now tell me about a time when you did *not* trust by [supervisor name], and why?

Re: - Relational Signalling

15. Reflecting on the relationship you have with your supervisor, can you tell me about an occasion where [supervisor name] has been able to demonstrate he/she cares about you, as an individual? (so, your personal hopes, challenges, perhaps family circumstances)
16. Are there any challenges around [supervisor name] demonstrating that he/she cares about you?

(Relates to research objective R03)

Now I am going to ask you some general questions about the [name of organisation] as a whole. Some people have struggled to talk about the whole organisation, so you can just talk about your area if that is easier.

17. How do you think the organisation, *helps* trust between staff? (Refer to handout.)
Can you give any examples of this?
18. How do you think the organisation, the way it is set up, or its systems, *hinders* trust between staff? Can you give any examples?
19. What is the worst story or example of trust within this organisation?
20. What is the best story or example of trust within this organisation?

21. Can you give me any examples of where the ‘walk and the talk’ of this organisation don’t match?
22. Any examples of where they do it well, where the ‘walk and the talk’ do match?
23. Can you describe any issues around power or control that make trust easy or difficult at [name of organisation]?
24. Are there any things that you would like to stop or decrease, to help build trust between staff within your organisation?
25. Are there any things that you would like to see continued or more of, to build trust between staff within your organisation?

Section 3 – wrap up

Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and sharing your thoughts. If there is anything else you wish to discuss, here are my contact details. The process from here is that there any more interviews to conduct, I will de-identify all the responses, look for themes and then I will present these common themes at a presentation to staff, most likely at your [name of whole of organisation meeting].

Thanks again for your participation, I really appreciate it.

D.2 Interview questions for ‘supervisor’ role participants

Thank participant for coming, discuss informed consent and ask whether they have any questions.

- Re-iterate the section ‘My promises to you’ (on promotional poster)
- I will be asking about the ‘best’ and ‘worst’ case as these are easily recalled
- If questions don’t make sense, let me know and I will rephrase
- I am interested in your thoughts and experiences here at the [name of organisation] and please give examples where possible
- Show recorder off switch

Put on digital recorder – ask if they can turn off (not just put on silent) their mobile phone as it interferes with the recording.

Section 1: Warm up questions to ease participant into the interview.

1. Tell me a little about the area that you work in, what you do.
2. Roughly how many people are in your team?
3. Have you worked in this team for long?
4. As I will be referring to your supervisor in some questions, do you mind telling me the name of your supervisor?
5. Have you known [supervisor name] for long?

Section 2.

6. How would you describe trust in the work environment?

Check the answer with below definition and add bits the respondent did not say.

‘[T]rust is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another party, based upon the expectation that the other will perform a particular action that is important [to the trustor]’

(Relates to research objective R02a)

These questions are about the relationship between you and your staff [Accompanied by downward hand gesture indicating direction of trust]

7. Tell me about a time, or what your staff do that that leads you to trust them.
8. Tell me about a time, or what your staff do, that lowers your trust in them.

(Relates to research objective RO1b)

These next questions are about how your staff trust you, as their supervisor. [Accompanied by upwards hand gesture indicating direction of trust]

9. What do you think your staff observe about your actions or work that increases their level of trust in you, and give me an example of an occasion when this has occurred?
10. What do you think would lead your staff to question their level of trust in you, or have less trust in you?

Re: - Relational Signalling

11. Reflecting on the relationship you have with your direct reports, can you tell me about an occasion where [supervisor name] has been able to demonstrate he/she cares about you, as an individual? (So, your personal hopes, challenges, perhaps family circumstances.)

(Relates to research objective R02b)

These next questions are about [name of supervisor]'s trust in you. [Accompanied by downwards hand gesture indicating direction of trust]

12. What you think [supervisor name] sees in you (how you act for example, or the work you complete) that leads [supervisor name] to trust you?
13. How does [supervisor name] demonstrate that s/he trusts you?
14. Has there been an occasion when you have felt particularly trusted by [name of supervisor], when [name of supervisor] believed s/he relied on you – if so, can you tell me about this?
15. Trust tends to be specific, for example, I might trust someone to return a book, but not trust them to look after my kids. Are there any circumstances where you do *not* feel trusted by [name of supervisor]?
16. How did s/he show that s/he did not trust you?
17. Has there been anything that you have done, or failed to do, that has lowered [supervisor name]'s level of trust in you?
 - Yes: please tell me about this
 - No: Okay, then, can you answer based on your knowledge of [supervisor name]. What would one of their team need to do, or fail to do, that would lower [supervisor name]'s trust in that staff member?

(Relates to research objective R01a)

The next questions are about you, trusting your supervisor, [supervisor name]. [Accompanied by an upwards hand gesture indicating direction of trust]

18. Tell me about a time when you have trusted [supervisor name], and why?
19. Now tell me about a time when you did *not* trust by [supervisor name], and why?

Re: Relational Signalling

20. Reflecting on the relationship you have with your supervisor, can you tell me about an occasion where [supervisor name] has been able to demonstrate he/she cares about you, as an individual? (So, your personal hopes, challenges, perhaps family circumstances.)

(Relates to research objective R03)

Now I am going to ask you some general questions about the [name of organisation] as a whole. Some people have struggled to talk about the whole organisation, so you can just talk about your area if that is easier.

21. How do you think the organisation, *helps* trust between staff? (Refer to handout.) Can you give any examples of this?
22. How do you think the organisation, the way it is set up, or its systems, *hinders* trust between staff? Can you give any examples?
23. What is the worst story or example of trust within this organisation?
24. What is the best story or example of trust within this organisation?
25. Can you give me any examples of where the ‘walk and the talk’ of this organisation don’t match?
26. Any examples of where they do it well, where the ‘walk and the talk’ do match?
27. Can you describe any issues around power or control that make trust easy or difficult at [name of organisation]?
28. Are there any things that you would like to stop or decrease, to help build trust between staff within your organisation?
29. Are there any things that you would like to see continued or more of, to build trust between staff within your organisation?

Section 3 – wrap up

Do you have any questions?

Thank you for your time and sharing your thoughts. If there is anything else you wish to discuss, here are my contact details. The process from here is that there any more interviews to conduct, I will de-identify all the responses, look for themes and then I will present these common themes at a presentation to staff, most likely at your [name of whole of organisation meeting].

Thanks again for your participation, I really appreciate it.

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Figure 1: Causal Attribution Model of Trust Repair
on page 89 of:

Tomlinson, E. & Mayer, R. (2009). The Role of Causal Attribution Dimensions in Trust Repair. *The Academy of Management Review*, 34(1), 85-104. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27759987>

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Date: January 19, 2018

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Figure 1: Proposed Model of Trust

on page 715 of:

Mayer, R., Davis, J., & Schoorman, F. (1995). An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust. *The Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 709-734.

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